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NEARBY

GBA told not to rope in BLOs as enumerators

BENGALURU
With the Census beginning on Wednesday, the GBA has been instructed not to draw those who have been functioning as Booth Level Officers (BLOs) in the city, as enumerators for the Census. » PAGE 7

GST collection grew by 11.6%

BENGALURU
In a year where the GST rate rationalisation threw up a huge challenge, data shared by the Commercial Taxes Department shows that a total of ₹1.58 lakh crore was collected as GST in the State, a growth of 11.6% from 2024-2025. » PAGE 8

Commercial LPG, jet fuel rates up amid Iran crisis

Major metro cities hit with a price hike of more than 10% for commercial cylinders; price of aviation turbine fuel up 9% for domestic travel; no change in prices for household LPG cylinders

Saptaparno Ghosh
Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

State-run oil marketing firms hiked the price of commercial liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders by more than 10% in major metro cities on Wednesday, while the price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) was more than doubled for international air travel and chartered flights.

On the other hand, travellers flying within the country faced a smaller ATF rate increase of around 9%.

The Centre defended the hikes, noting that its oil marketing companies (OMCs) are bearing the brunt of the spike in global oil prices.

There has been a 44% spike in benchmark Saudi Contract prices between March and April, as 20% to 30% of global LPG is stranded in the Strait of Hormuz amid the ongoing U.S.-Iran war in West Asia.

The Indian Oil Corporation set the new price of a 19 kg commercial cylinder in Delhi at ₹2,078.5, a hike of ₹195.5 from the ₹1,883 price set on March 7.

Similarly, Mumbai woke up to a ₹196 hike on each commercial cylinder, while a ₹203 price increase was seen in Chennai, and ₹218 hike in Kolkata. The effect of the hike is expected to be felt across the country. There has been no change to the prices of LPG cylinders meant for household use.

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INDIGO RAISES LEVY
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Fuels on fire

According to the government, the LPG hike has been necessitated by a 44% spike in benchmark Saudi Contract prices as 20-30% of global LPG remain stranded in the conflict-hit Strait of Hormuz

Commercial LPG prices hiked by ₹196-218 per cylinder across the country
Aviation fuel prices more than doubled for international flights; up 8.6% for domestic
Under-recoveries of oil marketing companies projected to cross ₹40,484 crore by May-end
Commercial LPG consumption less than 10% of total LPG consumption in India, says Centre
IndiGo increases fuel surcharges up to ₹950 for domestic and to ₹10,000 for international flights

Tehran denies Trump's claim of seeking ceasefire

CHENNAI
U.S. President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that Iran asked for a ceasefire and he would consider it once the Strait of Hormuz is open. Iran said it has not made any such proposal and will continue the war "until the aggressor is punished and compensated is paid". » PAGE 16

Exclusion from rolls doesn't repeal voting rights forever, says SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The rights of West Bengal voters purged from the electoral rolls during the special intensive revision (SIR), and unable to make it to any of the supplementary lists ahead of the Assembly election, cannot be "washed away forever", the Supreme Court said on Wednesday.

A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant made the observation in the context of 19 tribunals constituted by the Election Commission of India (EC) to hear appeals of persons excluded from the electoral roll. Justice Joymalya Bagchi, on the Bench, said the adjudication and appellate processes of the SIR exercise must be taken to its logical conclusion, and anything less would lead to an "extremely oppressive" situation.

> The SIR exercise must be taken to its logical conclusion, and anything less would lead to an extremely oppressive situation
>
> **JUSTICE JOYMALYA BAGCHI**
> Supreme Court judge

The Bench also highlighted a Calcutta High Court communication saying nearly 47 lakh of a total 60 lakh claims under adjudication had already been disposed of and the remaining would be cleared by April 7. The appellate hearings would ensure justice for those excluded incorrectly, CJI Kant said.

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MANY OUT OF ROLLS
» PAGE 13

Hotels set to increase prices; auto drivers face fuel shortage

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The latest revision in prices of commercial LPG cylinders by ₹202 is set to pinch consumers hard, with most hotels in Bengaluru set to rise prices by at least 10%.

The increase in commercial LPG price announced on Wednesday was the second after the West Asia crisis began.

The price of a commercial LPG cylinder in Bengaluru has risen from ₹1,981 to between ₹2,161 and ₹2,183 now.

Meanwhile, shortage of LPG saw disruption in autorickshaw operations too across Bengaluru, with many fuel stations across the city witnessing long-winding queues.

FULL REPORTS ON
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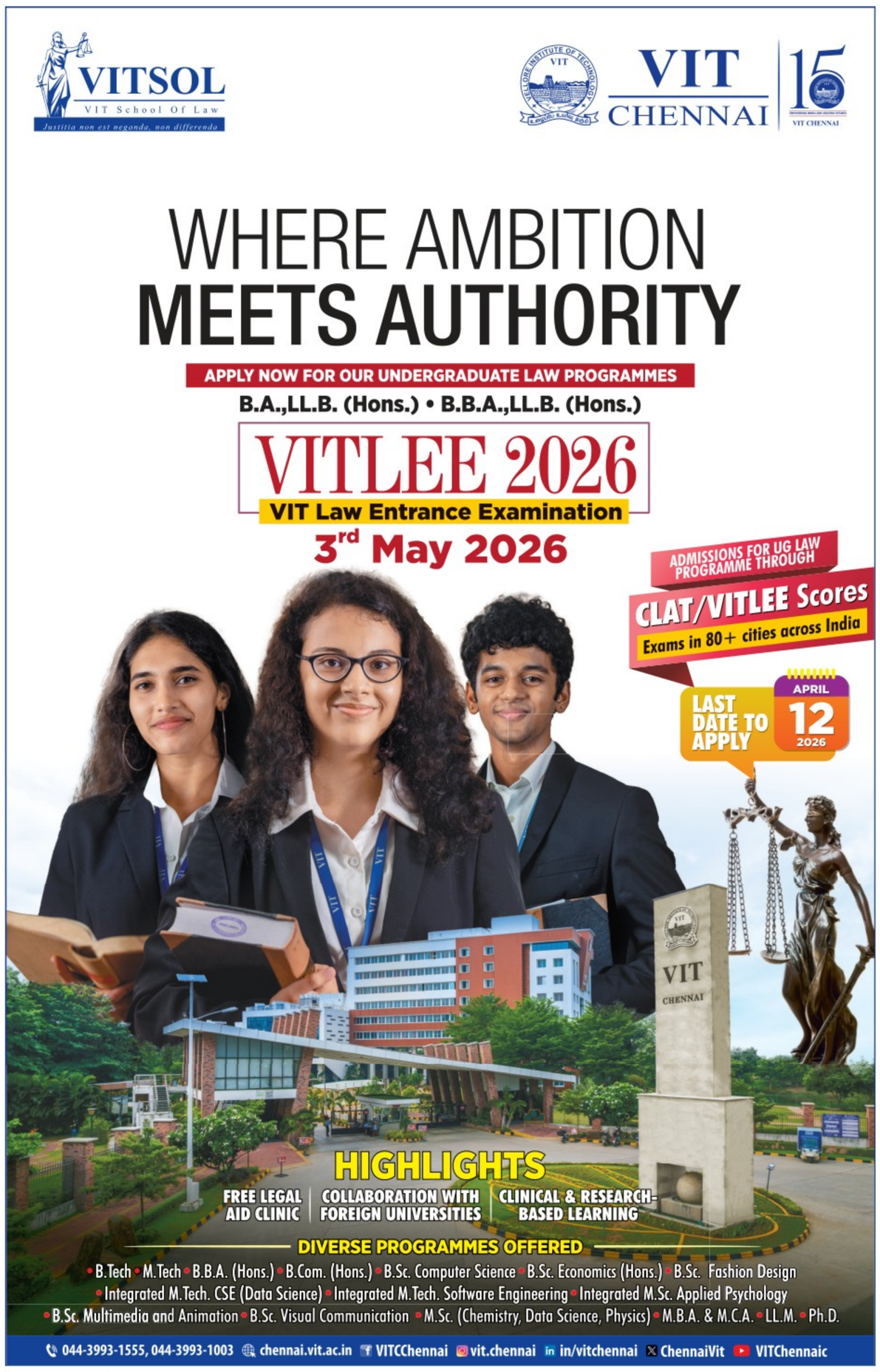
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Breaking into the world's top-20 would be good. That should be the main plan

The World No. 25 is pragmatic about his success while acknowledging the role of his coaches Willstrop and Harinderpal; the squash star, who prefers to stay in the present, is keen to participate in big events to maintain consistency

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

INTERVIEW

Abhay Singh

K. Keerthivasan

During the men's final of the JSW Indian Open in Mumbai in March this year, Spencer Lovejoy, a former top-60 player in the world and an incisive commentator, was asked what sets India's squash star Saurav Ghosal, a former World No. 10, apart.

The 28-year-old American remarked, "Attention to detail! His shots are precise, planned and thoughtful. Each one has a purpose, and Saurav executes it at a very high level."

At the CCI Stadium in Brabourne, Abhay Singh channelled the veteran as he himself maintained an exceptionally high level throughout, defeating Veer Chotrani in the final and dropping just one game across the tournament.

This triumph – his first PSA title outside the Challenger circuit and his 12th overall – signals that he is gradually approaching the level of his senior, Saurav, and offers hope that he may carry the baton forward for Indian squash.

In an interview with *The Hindu*, the 27-year-old, ranked 25th in the world, spoke about his immediate goals, training with former World No.1 James Willstrop and Harinderpal Singh Sandhu, preparing for the Asian Games, and cultivating the mindset required to become India's *numero uno*.

Excerpts:

In October 2025, you reached the top-30 in the world for the first time. How do you see the season gone by?

It's because I've been working closely with my coaches James [Willstrop] and Harry [Harinderpal Singh Sandhu]. It's nice to work with people you can trust a lot. They're not just my coaches, but also my best friends. I'm excited to see what lies ahead.

What are some of the learnings you will carry forward rom last year?

It's getting closer to the Olympics. The Asian Games are on the horizon. You have to step it up and be more careful with your matches and results.

I think a lot of things didn't go my way as well. I didn't really look at last year as a very good year, to be very honest. Personally, there was room for improvement. I lost the Nationals to Velavan Senthilkumar. I lost the Indian Open final in May 2025. From the outside, it might have looked like a good year. But I think there was certainly room for much more.

Fortunately enough, we'll get another year which will hopefully go my way. That's what we'll be looking forward to as a team.

As you go up the rankings, how do you look at the challenge of beating top 20 players in the world?

I've beaten top-ranked players. I beat Karim Abdul Gawad (World Champion, current World No.4 and former World No.1) in the 2025 Qatar Classic (Platinum Grade) and Farres Dessouky (WR 19) in the 2026 Windy City Open (Platinum).

It's not really a hurdle. It's just more about taking your chances when they arrive. That's what good players do. There's a big difference between almost beating a top player and beating a top player. That comes down to mentality and that comes down a lot to the individual that you are.

I think having that mentality has been a huge bonus for me. But that all comes from working with James. I think someone who has been World No. 1 in the sport can teach you a lot of good things.

The Asian Games this year is crucial. How are you gearing up for it?

I'm not really thinking so far ahead. But once the season is done at the British Open (May 30 to June 7), we'll all sit down together.

Obviously, scheduling needs to be done for the Games. But until then, it's a very calm, collected sort of scenario. I'm not someone to think very long-term. I like taking it maybe a week at a time.

Of your 12 PSA titles, 11 have come in Challengers. Any plans to shift to a higher level like Gold, Silver and Platinum?

My Challenger days are more or less done. I might play the one odd one here and there. But now it's about going into the big events and just learning from all these things. It can be deceptive if you win an easy event. Maybe you think you're playing super well. But then you go to a big event and you get absolutely hammered.

So, balance is good. But I think I'm focused now on just the bigger events. And when you're playing guys in the top 5 or 10, they really expose your weaknesses.

Any specific areas you've identified to work on with coaches James and Harinderpal?

It's the whole package, to be very honest. I don't think it's any specific area. Someone who's a top 5 in the world maybe better than me at everything, right? It's collectively taking all qualities and trying to improve them. It's like a lot about margins when it comes to scale of fitness.

When you're playing guys in the top 5 or 10, they really expose your weaknesses

It's more about believing in yourself. I think I'm doing that pretty well.

Does the tag of India's No. 1 come with any pressure?

Yes, it's a responsibility. Would I rather be number 2 or number 3 and not feel these things? Or be number 1 and feel these things? You know the answer, right?

Obviously. So it's good. I mean, pressure is prevalent in some ways. Being number 1 is an honour. Something I've grown up wanting to be.

How do you see the difference playing a Silver or a Platinum event and a Challenger?

In Challengers, you can have a bad week and still win. In Platinum, if you play badly, in 10 minutes the match will be over.

But at levels like this, bad days will be punished.

Playing in higher events – PSA Copper, Gold and Platinum – is a conscious and strategic decision with the Asian Games coming up?

Yeah, for sure. I can only play 12-15 events a year. So, if I can pick most of them to be big ones, then things will go well. Big events for now; that's the plan.

In the current season, you have quite a few second round (round-of-16) exits. What are the lessons?

It's all been positive, to be honest. This season has been good. Some of the results and the squash has been satisfactory.

There are still five to six events to go for the season to end. Hopefully, I stay as consistent as I was. And my ranking will go only upwards.

How is your mental approach when you take on higher-ranked players?

It's always been the same. Higher or lower, I am very relaxed.

How does a typical training block look like for you in a packed PSA calendar?

Summers and winters are heavy and intense. I just had a three-week training block in Pontefract, England (before the JSW Indian Open from March 18 to 22), which was good. Hopefully, all that works and translates into some good results.

Now, India has three players in the world's top 50 and Velavan Senthilkumar just is out of the top 50 (52).

It is a good time for Indian squash. Full credit to the boys.

What do you make of the pool of youngsters coming into Indian squash now?

Chotrani is doing well. Nineteen-year-old Ayaan Vaziralli, too shown a lot of promise. I think women's squash is in safe hands. We don't have to worry about it. But of course, depth is an issue in the women's game. That will manage itself over the next few years.

Maybe some young ones will follow Anahat Singh's footsteps. Obviously, I'm not writing myself off! I think I'm quite young as well.

Coming back to the Asian Games where the singles winner will automatically get a spot in the 2028 Olympics. Does that play in your mind?

It's still like five months away. We have a long way to go. We are one of the best sides as far as team events go, being the defending champions.

What are your targets for the rest of the 2025-26 season?

Breaking into the world's top 20 will be good. I'll have to manage a few good upsets at the events coming up. That should be the main plan.

The World championships individuals will be held from May 8 to 16 at Giza, Egypt. Anything specifically planned?

In my first Worlds (2023), I lost in the first round. In the second Worlds (2025), I lost in the second. Hopefully, it gets better this time!

Is the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics on your mind?

It's too far away. Two and a half years is a long time.

After second commercial LPG hike, hotels plan to raise prices again

The latest revision in prices comes at a time when the Union government has also not reinstated the ₹150 discount that bulk buyers received on the MRP, which was withdrawn in March owing to tensions in West Asia

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Hotels in Bengaluru are once again under pressure after the price of commercial LPG cylinders was hiked by ₹202 on Wednesday, in Bengaluru, marking the second increase in less than two months. The impact, hoteliers say, will be felt across the supply chain, with hoteliers having no option but to pass on the burden to customers, again. Menu prices, they say, are set to rise by at least 10%, as input costs continue to climb.

The latest revision in commercial LPG cylinders has come at a time when the Union government has also not reinstated the ₹150 discount that bulk buyers earlier received on the MRP, which was withdrawn during March owing to tensions in West Asia. With the latest hike, the price of a commercial LPG cylinder in Bengaluru has risen from ₹1,981 to between ₹2,161 and ₹2,183. This follows an earlier increase of ₹115 on March 7.

Hoteliers say menu prices are set to rise by at least 10%, as input costs continue to climb. FILE PHOTO

Hoteliers said that not only LPG cylinder prices, but prices of edible oil and charcoal have increased by nearly 30%, while the cost of parcel packaging materials has gone up by around 25%. Even bottled water has seen a price increase, further narrowing margins.

S. P. Krishnaraj of Nisarga Grand told *The Hindu* that hotels were already dealing with supply gaps and the hike has only added further pressure. "Cylinders are not available as per demand. In the black market, the price of a cylinder is already five times the market value ," he said, adding that the removal of bulk purchase discounts has added to the pressure.

Roopa Shastri, who runs a hotel in Gandhinagar, said a price hike was unavoidable. "There is no way to sustain operations under these conditions," she said. She noted that a standard two-partition meal container now costs ₹17.50, up from ₹14, while a one-litre water bottle has increased from ₹8.40 to ₹9.35, cutting down on an already thin margin. She added that the industry was already operating on tight margins from the last month, and the latest hike had only made the situation more difficult.

Pressure

Hoteliers say the pressure is coming from multiple sources as even basic raw materials like vegetables, milk and other daily supplies are costing more. What is making it worse, they say, is that business has still not fully bounced back to a level where they can absorb these costs. Many hotels are still running with trimmed menus and limited items, but the cost of preparing even those has gone up, they said.

Autorickshaw drivers fear halt in services as LPG shortage hits city

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A shortage of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) disrupted autorickshaw operations across Bengaluru on Wednesday, with long queues reported at fuel stations in several parts of the city.

A few bunks had shut shop as their supply had run out, they claimed. The supply crunch, linked to the ongoing crisis in West Asia, has triggered concern among drivers who rely on LPG for their daily livelihood. Drivers said the situation could severely impact transport services if it persists for another couple of days. Many warned that a continued shortage may force autorickshaws off the roads, affecting thousands of commuters who depend on them for last-mile connectivity.

Rajesh Kumar, an autorickshaw driver from Baiyappanahalli, said he spent hours trying to refuel, but returned empty-handed. "I began work early in the morning and went to fill LPG, but the queue was unusually long. We were told there was no supply. I tried other stations as well, but the situation was the same everywhere. I have exhausted my fuel just searching for gas," he said.

Autorickshaw drivers wait in long queues for filling LPG at an outlet, on Mysuru Road on Wednesday. K. MURALI KUMAR

The disruption is not limited to Bengaluru. Similar scenes were reported from other parts of Karnataka, where agitated drivers staged protests outside LPG outlets. In Ballari, autorickshaw drivers demonstrated after supplies were halted, alleging price hikes at certain private outlets.

Suresh R., an autorickshaw driver from Ballari, claimed that while the standard LPG price is around ₹84 per litre, some private suppliers were charging up to ₹94. "We protested because this is unfair. Both drivers and passengers are suffering due to the sudden increase and shortage," he said.

Auto Union leaders too said that these are big concerns which they have not seen so far. Rudramurthy, general secretary of the Auto Rickshaw Drivers' Union (ARDU), said that rising fuel costs and irregular supply have made it difficult for drivers to sustain daily earnings.

"Since Wednesday morning, supply has been inconsistent across stations. Many outlets are not even allowing full tanks, which directly affects our income," he said.

Meanwhile, M. Manjunath, president of the Adarsh Auto and Taxi Drivers' Union, attributed the issue largely to private fuel companies. He said state-run oil companies appeared to have relatively stable supply, while private operators were either limiting distribution or increasing prices.

President Murmu lauds Siddaganga Mutt for its contribution towards creation of inclusive society

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

President of India Droupadi Murmu has lauded the services of Sree Siddaganga Mutt, which, by imparting education to underprivileged students from marginalised sections of society and rural areas, is making an invaluable contribution towards the creation of an inclusive society.

The President also appreciated the Mutt for carrying forward the legacy of Shivakumara Swami's noble deeds. "It is only by treading the path of nation-building, philanthropy and unwavering devotion to duty that we can truly offer our homage to Sree Sivakumara Swamiji," she said.

President Droupadi Murmu addressing the audience during the Guruvandana Mahotsava of Shivakumara Swami at Sree Siddaganga Mutt, in Tumakuru on Wednesday. ANI

The President presided over the Guruvandana Mahotsava for Shivakumara Swami of the Mutt on Wednesday; the occasion also marked his 119th birth anniversary.

Ms. Murmu said the Mutt is upholding and advancing a centuries-old tradition of service and spirituality in the contemporary era. "In our tradition, the gift of knowledge is accorded immense significance. Knowledge and education serve as the very foundation for personality development and character building. It is education that paves the way toward self-reliance," she said. "Diligence, public service, and national service are linked together. Spirituality provides a robust foundation for both public service and national service. Karnataka stands as a prime example, showcasing the most impressive instances of public service, national service, spirituality, and modern progress," she said.

Registrar of KSNC held for sexual harassment

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The accused had reportedly failed to comply with a police notice asking him to appear for questioning

The Upparpet police have arrested K. Mallu, 50, the registrar of the Karnataka State Nursing Council, for allegedly sexually harassing a female employee, officials said on Wednesday.

According to the police, the 25-year-old complainant, who was working in the registrar's office, approached the police on March 26 alleging that she was being sexually harassed by the registrar and she was unable to continue working. An FIR was registered with the Upparpet police. The police issued a notice to the accused to appear for questioning. However, he reportedly failed to comply. "Since the suspect did not appear before the investigating officer despite repeated reminders, the police arrested the accused on March 31," a senior official said.

He was produced before the court and remanded in judicial custody for further investigation.

Corporations' budgets await govt. approval as FY 26–27 begins

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Despite the new financial year 2026-2027 having begun on Wednesday, the government is yet to approve the budgets presented by the Bengaluru corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority.

On March 27 and 28, the Bengaluru Corporations presented their respective budgets with a total outlay of ₹20,217 crore. Generally, before the start of the financial year, the Urban Development Department (UDD) reviews the civic budgets and obtains government approval. However, this year, the budgets are yet to be reviewed and approved by the government, and it is likely to take the next three days for assent.

Tushar Giri Nath, Additional Chief Secretary, UDD, held a meeting with the corporations on Wednesday, where he assessed all the allocations. According to sources in the know, all corporations have drafted their outlays in line with the guidelines given by the UDD. Therefore, there are no deviations in the budgets presented by the new corporations.

Deposited

To run the corporations until government approval is received, sources said they have been permitted by the UDD to set aside 30% of the total outlay, which has been deposited in a vote-on-account.

"Anticipating that the budgets will be approved, we have got permission to spend 30% of the total outlay. This money will be used for salaries of corporation employees and other basic expenditures," the source confirmed to *The Hindu*.

Minister D. Sudhakar in critical condition

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The condition of Minister D. Sudhakar, who was admitted to a private hospital following a lung infection, is reported to be critical.

Hospital sources said he has been placed on Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO), an advanced life-support system used in cases of severe, potentially reversible heart or lung failure.

Sources in the Chief Minister's Office indicated that his health has deteriorated over the past four to five days due to worsening respiratory complications.

Mr. Sudhakar, who holds the Planning and Statistics portfolio, is currently being treated in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at a hospital in Yeshwanthpur and remains under close medical supervision, sources added.

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BUSINESS CONNECT — A Business Initiative

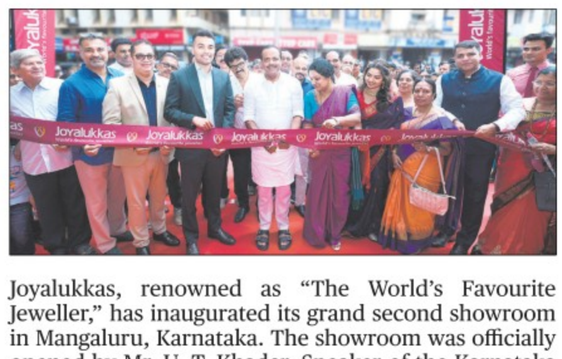
Prayers for Global Peace organized by Bangalore Trade Association

With the ongoing war which does not seem to see a near end, the Bangalore Trades Association, now in its 125th year, organized a Prayer for Global Peace. Hundreds of members and volunteers participated in a unique candle-lit silent march from Anil Kumble Circle to Deepam Silks. The event concluded with a candle-lit silent prayer for global peace held in front of Deepam Silks.

Citizen Watches launch of Bulova at Taj Bangalore Airport

Citizen Watches (India) Pvt. Ltd. officially announced the launch of Bulova in India at an exclusive event held at Taj Bangalore Airport on March 24, 2026, attended by distinguished global and Indian leadership. The event featured key strategic perspectives from senior executives. Mr. Kawato Ryota, Managing Director, presented "CITIZEN @ Global Arena," highlighting India's increasing significance in the company's global vision. Mr. Ikeyama Satoshi, Managing Director, Citizen Watches (H.K.) Ltd., offered a comprehensive SWOT-based analysis of the Indian market, while Mr. Koichiro Usui, General Manager, shared globally recognized marketing best practices. Focusing on the domestic market, Mr. Sandeep Hegde outlined the brand's current positioning and its future growth roadmap in India. Mr. Lakshmikanthan D emphasized trust and clarity through his theme, "No Fine Prints - Thorough Transparency," while detailing the strategic journey behind Bulova's entry into the Indian market. This milestone marks Bulova's formal debut in India, introducing its rich legacy of innovation, craftsmanship, and distinctive design to a growing base of discerning consumers.

GRT Jewellers launches first standalone showroom for Oriana lightweight jewellery in Jayanagar, Bengaluru



Recently Oriana, a contemporary lightweight jewellery brand by GRT Jewellers, opened its first standalone showroom in Jayanagar. The launch marks a key step in expanding Oriana as a modern, design-focused brand for young women. The brand offers lightweight diamond, gold, and silver jewellery designed for versatility–suitable for daily wear as well as special occasions. The new showroom provides an immersive, youthful shopping experience, with collections tailored to Gen Z, millennials, and working professionals. Speaking on the launch, Mr.G.R. 'Anand' Ananthapadmanabhan, Managing Director of GRT Jewellers highlighted that Oriana aims to reflect modern women's lifestyles, emphasizing individuality, everyday elegance, and self-expression, while building on GRT Jewellers' long-standing legacy and craftsmanship. Sharing his thoughts, Mr.G.R.Radhakrishnan, Managing Director of GRT Jewellers, spoke about strengthening bond with the younger consumers and Gen Z's, just like how they have delighted millions of customers with GRT, for over six decades across 66 showrooms.

Joyalukkas Grand New Second Showroom inauguration in Mangaluru

Joyalukkas, renowned as "The World's Favourite Jeweller," has inaugurated its grand second showroom in Mangaluru, Karnataka. The showroom was officially opened by Mr. U. T. Khader, Speaker of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly, in the presence of celebrity actress Nithya Ram, Smt. Poornima, Corporator of the Central Ward, Mr. Thomas Mathew, Executive Director of Joyalukkas, Mr. Anish Varghese, Head of Marketing, Mr. Rajesh Krishnan, Head of Retail, along with other distinguished dignitaries.

Early screen use stunts vital social growth of children, experts warn

Paediatricians and psychologists are increasingly concerned about how children may miss out on real-world interactions with people and objects if they're exposed to screens from an early age; this could affect their ability to develop healthy relationships with people around them as they grow older

Rohini Subrahmanyam
BENGALURU

Unhealthy exposure: Children, even adolescents, are likely to bear the brunt of increased screen usage in the form of poorer emotional regulation, detachment from reality, and a host of other mental health problems. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Be it our phones, tablets or our laptops – everyday, we interact with various digital devices designed to make our lives easier. Especially since the pandemic, even children have been exposed to this electronic world at a very young age. Earlier, parents would desperately brandish toys to distract crying children, now they tamp down tantrums using YouTube videos.

"Vision is very, very powerful for the human experience," said Melissa Greenberg, a clinical psychologist at Princeton Psychotherapy Centre in New Jersey. "So kids get really drawn into the visual stimulation. And then, throughout childhood, they just miss opportunities to interact with the world through their other senses."

Paediatricians and psychologists are increasingly concerned about how children may miss out on real-world interactions with people and objects if they are exposed to screens from an early age. This could affect their ability to develop healthy relationships with people around them as they grow older. And not just very young children, even older children's or adolescents' lives can bear the brunt of increased screen and social media usage in the form of poorer emotional regulation, detachment from reality, loss of focus, and a host of other mental health problems.

Dr. Greenberg also draws her insights from her personal life, with two children aged six and eight. Having raised them through the pandemic, she understands the perils of isolation and the importance of interacting with others. Many parents, including herself, were in a difficult situation because of the constant social distancing, so they may have handed tablets to children without thinking too deeply about it, she said.

"We are not in the pandemic anymore, but I think parents find themselves in these positions where they're exhausted or they are also dependent on screens," she explained. "And they need their kid to be entertained for a few minutes, and they just hand them something."

But unknowingly, they may end up opening their children's eyes to a whole other online world – without a clear picture of everything they might get access to and how it will shape them.

Grow up to feel uncomfortable

To build some safeguards after the pandemic, the American Academy of Paediatrics recommended that children below the age of two should have very limited screen time, unless it is for video calls. This is primarily because those early years are when children are still developing their senses. Overwhelming them with visual stimuli – even if unintentionally – can skew their sense of the world and affect their interactions with others. Hunching over phones can also affect children's posture.

"If you're looking at a screen, you are not doing all of the other things that babies should be doing, [like] crawling, touching, exploring the world around them," Dr. Greenberg said. "So I don't know that the screen itself is the problem; it is the opportunity cost of babies exploring their environments – that is how they learn about the world around them."

Some children experience the consequences of being absorbed in a digital screen later as well, as they get a bit older, enter adolescence or become teenagers. With more time online, some children grow up to feel uncomfortable with in-person interactions as well. One recent study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* on U.S. youth reported that teenagers spend an average of about 8.5 hours a day on screen-based entertainment.

"You go into a cafeteria in a school... 15 years ago it would have been chaotic and loud and everyone's playing and moving around. Now you walk in and everyone's like this," she said, mimicking being hunched over a phone. "They're all quiet."

Just like with toddlers, this could also lead to missed opportunities of meaningful social interactions with peers at a young age. Being unable to develop proper social skills could strain relationships with friends and family, with lifelong repercussions for mental health.

Drastic consequences

At times, the mental health issues can take a darker turn. Some children have unfettered access to phones even before they are eight years old, which, according to recent research, could lead to issues such as hallucinations, feelings of aggression towards other people, diminished self-worth, and even suicidal thoughts as they grow older. The data, based on self-reported assessments from several thousands of people worldwide, suggest that for each year younger than 13 that children get their phones, the more their mental health issues increase as they enter adulthood.

An extreme case of phone addiction transpired recently in Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh. Three minor sisters aged 12 to 16 years had dropped out of school in 2020 and were addicted to social media, cartoons, and TV shows on their parents' phones. When their parents restricted their phone use and threatened to get them married, the sisters killed themselves by jumping off their balcony in the early hours of February 4. In the note they left behind, the girls described how banning them from the online shows made them feel lonely. This is not an isolated incident: multiple instances of teens killing themselves when told to stay away from phones suggests an alarming rise in digital addiction.

One reason for such drastic consequences could be that children are being brought up by technology instead of human beings, Tara Thiagarajan, who led the research correlating age of phone access to mental health issues and is the founder of Sapien Labs, a non-profit organisation studying how the human mind is changing over time across the world, said.

Take the case of a child at a table with their family in a restaurant. This situation has opportunities for simple social interactions. In a previous era, the child might have been reaching for things, trying things, and saying things to the others. Some people might reprimand; others might coo at the actions.

Such interactions teach children how to read other people's body language from a young age and how to conduct themselves in a group setting, including getting themselves heard, holding conversations, and managing conflicts.

Aspects like the tone of voice, facial expressions, body language, and other non-verbal cues may either be warped or absent altogether in digital exchanges, which can affect children's abilities to form lasting inter-personal relationships

Dr. Thiagarajan said growing up in a world dominated by online interactions prevents children from learning these social skills and interferes with their ability to develop a good intuition of other people's personalities.

Although engaging in video calls with other people is better than watching videos, one can end up missing larger environmental cues, per Dr. Greenberg. Some subtle cues can slide through unnoticed on a video call, like noticing someone's nervousness by how they are tapping their feet.

Aspects like the tone of voice, facial expressions, body language, and other non-verbal cues may either be warped or absent altogether in digital exchanges, which can affect children's abilities to form lasting inter-personal relationships. "You're becoming adept at technology, but you can no longer manage in a human world," said Dr. Thiagarajan, of children growing up in a society undergoing rapid "technologisation".

"When most of what goes on in your mind is from the screen, you've lost, to a large degree, your awareness of the physical environment around you. That's what creates these feelings of detachment from reality, and also the hallucinations."

'It's not just about your children'

In another meta-analysis of 117 previously published studies, Michael Noetel at the University of Queensland and his colleagues reported similar findings: that increased screen time leads to more socioemotional problems in children. Tracking nearly three lakh children over time, they found "screens and emotional problems feed into each other like a vicious cycle," according to Dr. Noetel. "Kids who spend more time on screens are more likely to develop anxiety, depression, aggression, and attention problems. But it works the other way too: children who are already struggling emotionally turn to screens to cope."

Because anxious children tend to use their phone more, Dr. Greenberg said that it is tricky to tease apart correlation from causation vis-à-vis screen use. But she noted that increased cell phone usage and social media exposure could exacerbate existing conditions. "Anecdotally speaking, everyone I work with feels better when they spend less time on their devices," she said.

To prevent children from getting addicted, parents should ensure that their children use phones for a limited time, based on what is recommended for their age group, according to Dr. Noetel.

"Children who stayed within guidelines showed almost no increased risk. Guidelines recommend under an hour for preschoolers, under two hours for older kids," he said. "Problems appeared when children regularly exceeded these limits."

Even if parents limit screen use, Dr. Greenberg said that the question of whether children should have access to phones at night, or when they are alone in their rooms, should also be addressed. "When a child is doing something privately on a device unsupervised, no matter how many parental controls you might set, they may access things that are really inappropriate," she said. "Because of the way that the algorithms work, you really never know what might pop up next on your children's feed."

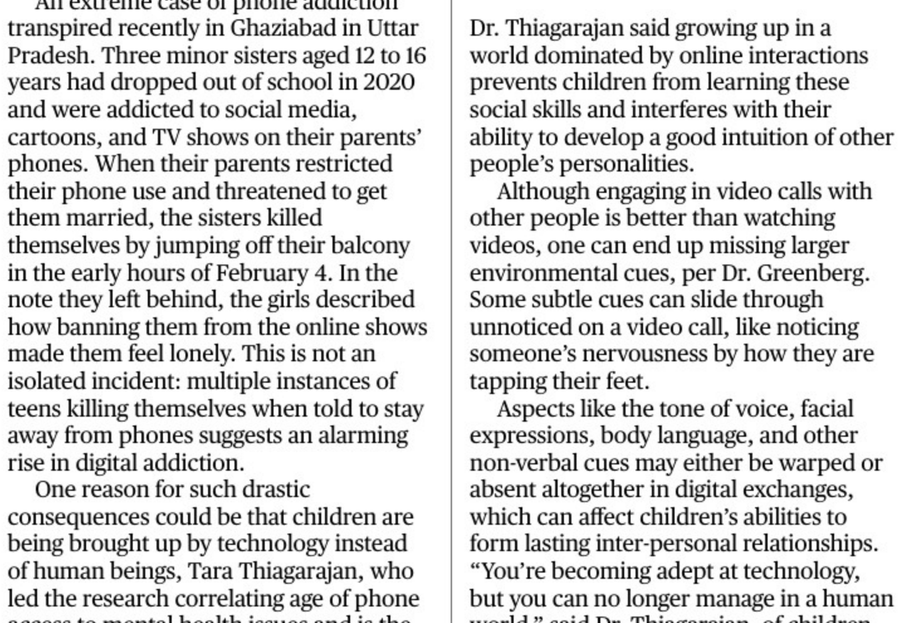
Dr. Thiagarajan explained how the internet should have more water-tight gateways that prevent children from accessing dangerous content, which could include porn sites or violent videos.

Dr. Greenberg also emphasised how each child is different: some may be able to give up their screen time readily but some may be more drawn to the digital world, and thus could find it more difficult to limit their online activities. Her own children are like that, she admitted, and they are most likely in the majority. "If you have a kid who has a harder time putting it away, that doesn't mean you should just let them continue to have it," she said. "It means you really need to work with them to figure out how to manage the impulses so that they develop good habits around putting it away."

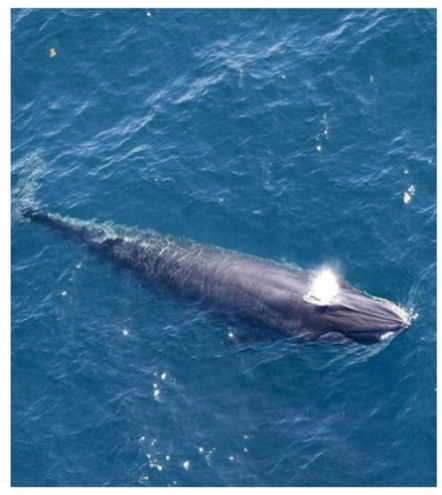
Dr. Greenberg also pointed out that parents should be careful about their own screen use around their children: "They should be aware that their kids are always watching and learning from them and observing their habits, and that that's a really important factor in how you're managing screens with your kids," she said. "It's not just about your kids; it's also about you."

(Rohini Subrahmanyam is a freelance journalist in Bengaluru. roh.subb@gmail.com)

Those in distress can dial Tele Manas helpline 1800-89-14416 for support.



Some children experience the consequences of being absorbed in a digital screen as they get a bit older. With more time online, some grow up to feel uncomfortable with in-person interactions. FILE PHOTO



Murky waters: A Rice's whale seen in the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Texas, U.S. FILE PHOTO

Rare whales in the way of Trump's oil drilling plan

Associated Press

One of the world's rarest whales lives in the Gulf of Mexico, where the Trump administration wants to expand oil and gas drilling that scientists fear could push the giant mammal to extinction.

Endangered Rice's whales live their entire lives in the gulf, where they are vulnerable to vessel strikes, noise pollution, oil spills, and climate change – all of which could increase with more drilling. Other animals, including threatened manatees and endangered sea turtles, also could be put at risk.

As the Iran war pushes energy prices sharply higher, U.S. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth invoked national security in seeking an exemption from endangered species laws, which make it illegal to harm or kill species on a protected list. The seldom-used Endangered Species Committee granted that request on Tuesday.

The Trump administration in the U.S. is pushing to expand oil drilling in an area where the Rice's whales spend their entire lives

Rice's whale is the only whale species that lives year-round in the Gulf of Mexico, where there are fewer than 100 left, per scientists.

Recognised as a distinct species in 2021, Rice's whale is usually found in a narrow area in the northeastern part of the water body.

They dive to the gulf floor for fatty fish, mainly silver-rag driftfish, during the day, then rest close to the surface at night. These dives are strenuous and their specific kind of food might also be affected by more drilling and other changes. Which means they are "quite living on the edge," Jeremy Kiszka, a biological sciences professor at Florida International University, said.

The whales are also susceptible to pollution, with a significant portion of an already small population believed to have been killed by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Many climate change impacts are "baked in," meaning they will persist even if fossil fuels were eliminated today, said Letise LaFeir, chief of conservation and stewardship at the New England Aquarium.

But the Trump administration proposal "is just compounding the immediate risks locally and the longer-term risks," she added. Although a government filing specifically mentions Rice's whales, other threatened and endangered animals also could be harmed by oil spills or other dangers, scientists said.

For example, hundreds of sea turtles, including endangered Kemp's Ridley and loggerheads, are rescued and rehabilitated every year before they are released into the Atlantic Ocean and swim for their nesting grounds in the Gulf, per Ms. LaFeir.

Before Tuesday, the committee had only issued exemptions twice. The first was for the construction of a dam on a section of the Platte River considered critical habitat for whooping cranes, though a negotiated settlement won significant protections that led to overall ecosystem improvements.

The second was for logging in northern spotted owl habitat, but the request was withdrawn after environmental groups sued, arguing that the committee's decision was political and violated legal procedures.

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Prevalence of hypertension in JCOs, other Army personnel

9.61 in per cent. Prevalence of hypertension in the Indian Army's junior commissioned officers and other ranks (JCOs/OR), as per data received from the record offices of arms and services of the force, up to December 31, 2023, stood at 9.61%, the government has informed a parliamentary panel. PTI

Percentage decline in Russia's seaborne diesel exports

3 in per cent. Russia's seaborne diesel and gasoil exports fell 3% in March from February to around 3.06 million metric tons as drone attacks disrupted fuel loadings at key ports, data from market sources and LSEG showed. Ultra-low-sulphur diesel shipments from the Baltic port of Primorsk fell to 1.713 million tons, the sources said. REUTERS

Number of personnel added to SDRF in Meghalaya

708 The Meghalaya government on Wednesday raised two battalions of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), boosting its capabilities to mitigate natural calamities, a Minister said. Each of the two battalions will comprise 354 personnel, taking the total strength to 708. PTI

Primary schools to be closed in Sikkim due to enrollment drops

17 The Sikkim government is planning to temporarily close 17 more primary schools this year due to declining enrollment, Education Department Secretary Tashi Chophel Lepcha said, attributing the trend to the State's low fertility rate. He said low enrollment continues to pose a challenge for the school education system. PTI

Migrants found dead by Italian coast guard off Lampedusa

19 The bodies of 19 migrants were recovered from a boat off the coast of Lampedusa on Wednesday by the Italian coast guard, the island's mayor said. Mayor Filippo Mannino said seven other migrants were being treated for "hypothermia and intoxication from hydrocarbon fumes". AFP

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Why is India pushing piped gas now?

Can PNG replace LPG for cooking? Why has LPG been preferred so far? How is LNG transported and used? What is holding back PNG expansion? Can domestic production meet demand? Will PNG reduce LPG import dependence?

EXPLAINER

M. Kalyanaraman

The story so far:
India has a total of 33 crore LPG connections. Recently, Anjan Kumar Mishra, Secretary at the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board, said that domestic natural gas production alone could cater to 30 crore connections if all were to switch to piped natural gas (PNG).

What is the difference between LPG, LNG, PNG, and CNG?
LPG is a co-product of oil refining and natural gas processing. That is, its production depends on the processing of both crude oil and natural gas.

Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), as the name suggests, is natural gas that has been cooled to below -160 degrees Celsius to turn it into a liquid for shipping. Liquefaction reduces its volume by 1,000 times.

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) is primarily used as a vehicular fuel. It involves compressing natural gas to a pressure of 200-250 kg/cm² (g) to reduce its volume and enable efficient distribution.

How are LPG and natural gas transported to the user?
Propane and butane gases are mixed, pressurised, and cooled to below 40 degrees Celsius, and then transported from the source to consuming countries via ships. LPG is bottled in cylinders and physically delivered to customers.

Piped natural gas is transported through pipelines. Before this, imported natural gas is liquefied and transported through LNG carriers. "LNG carriers use special cargo tanks and insulation systems designed for ultra-low temperatures," stated Mitsui O.S.K. Lines to *The Hindu*. "Put simply, the basic task is to move a very cold liquid onto the ship while preventing it from warming up too much."

At the destination, LNG is regasified and transported to the final consumer through pipes.

Last-mile delivery of LPG is easier through cylinders that are transported through trucks and tricycles than building an extensive pipeline network covering every household for natural gas. This has been a key reason why India adopted LPG for domestic cooking.

Why the push for piped gas against LPG now?
India's dependence on LPG imports is currently higher. For instance, in natural gas, India's one-year import was about 27 million tonnes of LNG last year, and production was roughly the same, according to government data. On the other hand, India – until recently – imported three-fifths of its LPG requirements, of which 90% was routed through the Strait of Hormuz, which has now been blocked due to the war in West Asia. Typical annual LPG consumption is 34 million tonnes, out of which 12 million tonnes are produced in India.

If gas is to be imported, LNG has many more sources across the world. In LPG, India was largely reliant on Saudi Arabia and Qatar and the supplies had to pass through the Strait to reach India. "Globally large capacities of liquefaction plants for natural gas are coming online over the next few years, so availability should be healthy," said Prashant Vasisht, Senior Vice President of ICRA.

A domestic LPG cylinder supplier carries cylinders for delivery in Bengaluru on March 30. J. ALLEN EGENUSE

Can natural gas replace LPG straight?
Natural gas is much lighter than LPG. But one kilogram of natural gas can deliver more energy than one kilogram of LPG. For cooking purposes, these differences are not significant, making PNG a drop-in replacement for LPG.

However, in industrial uses, the equipment may need to be tuned to a different setting or even altered. For instance, LPG is widely used by MSMEs for welding and cutting. Reports from the ground indicate that while the government is encouraging industrial users to switch, a lack of awareness and technical know-how may hamper adoption.

How is the government pushing for natural gas?
On March 26, *The Hindu* learnt from senior government officials that over the next two weeks, India could add another 15 lakh new PNG connections.

The official said that instituting last-mile connectivity amidst unfavourable city infrastructure in certain areas was among the major hurdles in expanding the piped gas network.

To speed it up, in a gazette notification, the Centre instituted provisions to help accelerate the uptake, which, among other things, included specific timelines for approving pipeline expansion in housing and non-housing areas.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) told the Parliamentary Standing Committee, which is assessing its demand for grants for FY 2026-27, that it is targeting to have in place a pipeline network that would cover 12 crore PNG connections by 2034.

The committee, in an earlier report, had asked the Ministry to help City Gas Distribution (CGD) entities to overcome difficulties in pursuing expansion, such as in obtaining permissions, land, bidding criteria, and NOC requirements from local authorities.

Across towns and cities, such as in Maharashtra or Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu, where the GAIL pipeline runs close, the government is now pushing for piping infrastructure for local distribution.

As of December, the government announced that India's gas pipeline network spans about 25,000 kilometres, with an additional 10,500 kilometres under construction. The government is also ensuring that PNG pricing remains competitive with LPG.

"PNG connections have now crossed 1.5 crore. A recent government gazette notification reinforces this direction, mandating that households cannot hold both LPG and PNG connections. As a result, roughly 6 million households will be required to surrender their LPG connection and transition fully to PNG within a three-month timeframe. This will bring total household PNG connections to 2 crore soon," said Manish Sejwal, Senior Vice President at Rystad Energy. "Since the 2020-21, the compounded annual growth rate in connections has been some 18%. A CAGR of 24% would be needed to reach 12 crore connections by 2034-35," he added.

What are the challenges?
The GAIL pipeline network is currently concentrated in western and northern India, with some coverage in Kerala and Bengaluru. The 10,000-kilometre-plus pipelines under construction cover tier-2 and tier-3 cities in parts of central and eastern India, as well as some parts of Tamil Nadu connecting to the Bengaluru leg, and one section going to the northeast. However, large regions in central, southern, and northeastern India remain uncovered. Further, the alignment of the gas pipeline network is more intended to serve industrial needs than households.

The government has aggressively given CGD licences that would cover more than 300 geographical areas covering households, small industries, hotels and restaurants. As of now, some 90 of them are still not connected to the main trunk pipeline. Last-mile connectivity remains an immediate challenge.

Even if projections of 12 crore PNG connections are met in another 10 years, LPG connections will still be more than 20 crore, leaving India requiring to import significant amounts of LPG.

A little less than 30% of natural gas use goes into making fertilizers, while power plants account for 13% and city gas distribution around 20%, said ICRA's Mr. Vasisht. Some 35% goes to sectors like refineries and industries.

A major diversion from these sectors such as power may be needed to cater to cooking gas demand. Mr. Vasisht said industrial consumers can switch to naphtha and furnace oil.

PNGRB secretary Mr. Mishra had said that as of now some 1.2 crore PNG connections consume three million metric standard cubic metres of gas every day.

To supply 13 crore connections, India will have to increase domestic production by at least one-third.

Industry observers say that an increase in domestic production from Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) fields is possible. Rystad Energy projects a 25% increase.

For instance, ONGC commenced production in the KG-DWN 98/2 Block in the KG basin in 2024. Peak production of the field is expected to be over 10 million metric standard cubic metres per day of gas, which would mean increasing today's overall gas production in India by 10%. Site officials expect the 98/2 block to increase ONGC gas output by 15% through more wells. Increasing imports through LNG may well be required if natural gas consumption is ramped up. India has some nine import terminals covering both coasts.

It will have to truly ramp up the pipeline network to leverage the imports. Further, India's LNG system is even more of a just-in-time system than LPG, with little long-term storage, unlike in Europe. Any disruption in imports will have an immediate impact on availability.

(With inputs from Saptaparno Ghosh and Appala Naidu)

THE GIST

- India has 33 crore LPG connections, but domestic natural gas production could cater to 30 crore connections if households switch to piped natural gas (PNG).
- LPG is delivered in cylinders, while natural gas is transported through pipelines or as LNG and regasified, with PNG emerging as a drop-in replacement for cooking.
- The government is pushing PNG to reduce high LPG import dependence, but pipeline expansion, last-mile connectivity, and supply constraints remain key challenges.

Delhi HC orders Rakshit Shetty's Paramvah Studios to pay ₹25 lakh for unauthorised use of songs in *Bachelor Party*

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has ordered Paramvah Studios, the production house of Kannada actor-filmmaker Rakshit Shetty, to pay ₹25 lakh to MRT Music for the unauthorised use of two songs in his Kannada film *Bachelor Party*. The amount includes ₹20 lakh towards the licence fee for the songs *Nyaya Ellide* and *Omme Ninnanu*, which had already been deposited during the proceedings,

Rakshit Shetty

and an additional ₹5 lakh imposed as exemplary costs for non-compliance with an earlier court order.

In a judgment delivered on March 28, Justice Tejas Karia held that MRT Music is the exclusive copyright holder of the two songs, having acquired the rights from master recording company Sangeetha through an assignment deed.

The court noted that the producers had approached MRT Music in January 2024 seeking a licence, but went ahead with the film's theatrical release on January 26, 2024, and later its OTT release without securing permission despite being informed of the licence fee. Rejecting the defence that the use was protected under "fair use", the court observed that the songs were used to enhance the narrative of the film and therefore could not be considered incidental. The court noted that *Nyaya Ellide* means "Where is the justice?". "It appears that the defendants have carefully chosen this well-known song to further the script of the impugned film," it noted. Similarly, *Omme Ninnanu* is used for 31 seconds in a scene where a character is shown reciting a version of this song.

It also found that the defendants were aware of its August 12, 2024 order but failed to comply with it in time, making them liable for contempt. However, considering an affidavit filed by the producers in October 2025 expressing regret and confirming compliance, the court chose not to impose imprisonment and instead directed payment of ₹5 lakh as costs.

KSRTC's training initiatives earn World HRD Congress Award

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has been conferred the World HRD Congress Award 2026 under the 'Best in Training and Organisation Development' category at a ceremony held in Kochi, Kerala, on Tuesday.

The award recognises KSRTC's extensive and structured training initiatives implemented across its five training centres, which cover fuel efficiency, refresher courses, accident-free driving, road safety awareness, and simulator-based training,an official said.

TUNGABHADRA BOARD:TB DAM

NOTIFICATION No.01/2026-27, Dated:01.04.2026

The under mentioned TB Board has exciusive immovable of its own Tungabhadra Project area Land property in TB Dam (namely Official Colony, Nissani Camp, PLC Colony, E.V Camp, Maruthi Nagar, HES Colony, Amaravathi Colony as mentioned below

SCHEDULE-A

All permanent and temporary residential and office buildings, open lands belonging to Tungabhadra Board.

SCHEDULE-B

Boundaries: East: Up to Railway Line (Hospet to Kottur Line) West : Up to Tungabhadra Reservoir North: Up to Tungabhadra River South: Up to Mountain range adjacent to Tungabhadra Reservoir

LANDS OF HOSAPETE TALUK ACQUIRED BY TUNGABHADRA BOARD

HOSAKOTE VILLAGE

Sl No.	Survey No.	Extent in Acre	Sl No.	Survey No.	Extent in Acre	Sl No.	Survey No.	Extent in Acre
1	22	0.63	20	45	2.08	39	102A	1.21
2	23	1.25	21	46	0.8	40	103A	1.21
3	24	1.25	22	48	0.96	41	104B	0.32
4	25	1.45	23	49A	3.36	42	106B	0.65
5	26	1.25	24	49B	1.2			
6	27	-	25	50	1.35			
7	28	0.69	26	62	1.05			
8	29A	1.73	27	63	1.14			
9	30	0.33	28	64A	0.51			
10	31	1.37	29	64B	0.18			
11	32	1.02	30	90	0.43			
12	33	0.23	31	93	0.11			
13	34	0.95	32	95	1.31			
14	36	1.96	33	96	1.23			
15	37	0.38	34	98	2.02			
16	38	1.64	35	99	1.35			
17	41	3.24	36	100A	0.43			
18	42	1.59	37	100B	1.13			
19	44	1.7	38	101	1.67			

AMARAVATHI VILLAGE

Sl No.	Survey No.	Extent in Acre	Sl No.	Survey No.	Extent in Acre	Sl No.	Survey No.	Extent in Acre
43	323	0.56	94	370B	0.29	145	555	3.58
44	348	0.8	95	370C	0.21	146	555B	3.6
45	351	0.92	96	370D	1.1	147	559A	0.1
46	333	1.38	97	371A	0.27	148	559B	0.5
47	339A	0.89	98	371B	0.23	149	561A	3.66
48	339B	4.85	99	371C	0.32	150	561B	2.29
49	339C	0.1	100	371D	0.36	151	563A	5.36
50	339D	1.72	101	373	7.53	152	559D	1.83
51	340	1.74	102	375A	0.55	153	559R	0.27
52	341	2.32	103	376B	9.95	154	559G	6.1
53	342	1.9	104	377	12.52	155	561D	0.45
54	343	1.04	105	379A	3.14	156	559E	5.14
55	341	2.01	106	379B	2	157	562	2.12
56	345	0.24	107	379C	9.27	158	563B	6.37
57	346	1.46	108	380A	2.19	159	567A	3.11
58	347	2.12	109	380B	2.61	160	568	4.68
59	349	1	110	381	17.3	161	556A	1.19
60	350	0.84	111	384	0.85	162	556C	1.37
61	352A	0.89	112	385	0.79	163	312B	1.67
62	352B	0.03	113	386	0.81	164	313B	3.6
63	353	0.98	114	388B	0.89	165	402	0.67
64	354	1.02	115	390B	1.47	166	404	4.24
65	355	1.44	116	391	1.47	167	405	3.56
66	356	0.6	117	392	3.64	168	406	2.2
67	357A	0.53	118	393	3.64	169	407	2.38
68	357B	0.03	119	393	7.02	170	408	0.32
69	358	1.01	120	395	5.14	171	410	2.5
70	359	0.98	121	396A	4.95	172	551A	5.42
71	360	0.6	122	411	4.32	173	552A	4.8
72	361	1.05	123	412	3.32	174	552B	3.65
73	362	0.76	124	413	8.34	175	553A	2.63
74	363	0.5	125	414	6.27	176	553C	2.18
75	364A	0.47	126	416A	5.27	177	553E	3.73
76	364B	0.55	127	396B	5.72	178	553F	14.03
77	364C	0.49	128	417	1.92	179	554A	5.99
78	364D	0.36	129	418	6.48	180	557A	4.32
79	365	1.11	130	419	5.08	181	557B	9.33
80	366	1.06	131	544	7.65	182	558	4.49
81	367A	1.59	132	515	10.7	183	560A	0.57
82	367B	1.99	133	546	4.1	184	560B	1.4
83	368A	0.65	134	546B	1.92	185	560D	1.17
84	368B	0.65	135	547A	5.47	186	564	1.82
85	369	1.2	136	547B	0.43	187	565B	0.61
86	383	0.96	137	548	6.72	188	565E	3.28
87	370A	0.9	138	550	5.32	189	534	7.10
88	534A	3.45	139	566	5.02	190	534A	
89	534B	3.65	140	390A	1.1	191	527B	2.34
90	334A	0.67	141	567A	2.74	192	529	1.46
91	332A	0.62	142	527B	2.34	193	533C	1.32
92	332C	0.56	143	523B	1.1	194	526	2.09
93	565	5.19	144	570	0.95			

MALLAPURAM VILLAGE

Sl No.	Survey No.	Extent in Acre
189	43	167

The Board noticed that the some persons are making attempt to trespass and making negotiations Whatsoever over the properties exclusively pertaining to TB Board properties mentioned in Schedule-B. In case anybody made such attempt or trespass or any kind of negotiations whatsoever in nature with respect to the Board 's property will be evicted under Sub -Section (4) & (5) of Karanataka Piblic Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised occupants) Act.1974 and further prosecuted under the provisions of suitable penal law. Also it is proposed to demolish all unauthorized constructions identified in the TB Project area mentioned in Schedule-B. Hence herewith the public notice has been given

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
HW & HLC Division,
TB Board, TB Dam.

Sd/-
Secretary
Tungabhadra Board
Tungabhadra Dam.

ANDHRA PRADESH POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

Paryavaran Bhavan, Near APIIC Housing Colony, Autonagar, Vijayawada-520007
Phone No. 0866-2463200,
Website: pcb.ap.gov.in

e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

Tender No.APPCB-12028/1/2026-SS-CL-APPCB-Date:02.04.2026.

Bids are invited through e-Procurement portal for Supply of Real-Time Ambient Air Quality Data Services, Visualization Platform & API Integration with APPCB and RTGS, Govt. of AP through IoT-based Sensor Network in all ULBs across the state of Andhra Pradesh. The tender document along with the tender schedule can be downloaded from **https://tender.apeprocurement. gov.in** & also available on APPCB website **www.pcb.ap.gov.in** w.e.f **03-04-2026 by 11.00 AM.** The last date for submission of bids: **20-04-2026 by 05.00 pm.** For details, Contact : **9177303280 / 9177303244.**

Sd/- **MEMBER SECRETARY**

PUBLIC NOTICE

This notice is issued on behalf of my client Sri.T.Chandrashekar to bring to the notice of the general public that the Original Sale Deed dated 03.08.2013, Registered document No.4603/20 13-14 of Book I, in the office of the Sub-Registrar Begur, Bangalore and Original Confirmation Deed dated 11.09.2013, Registered document No.2214/2013-14 Book I, in the office of the Sub-Registrar BTM Layout, Bangalore with respect of Site No.1, measuring 945Sq.tt., has been lost at the time of travelling. All the persons are hereby informed not to deal or carry out any transaction with anyone on the basis of the said Original documents. If anyone has already carried out or being carried out kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within7 days from this present along with that Police Complaint is also given vide Lost Report No.2132255/2026 dated 31.03.2026.

Y. Sowmya Yadav, Advocate
Samvruddhi Legal, # 83, Ground Floor, 5th 'A' Cross, 21st Main, J.P. Nagar 2nd Phase, Bangalore-78. **M : 9916343921**

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients Sri. Guggilam Umanageswara Rao, S/o. Sri. Guggilam Bala Subramanyam Guptha and his wife Smt. Pavithra C. S. have interested in purchasing the schedule property mentioned hereunder for a valuable consideration from its owners Mr. Shaik Hayath S/o. Late. Abdul Samad & Mr. Noorulla S/o. Mr. Hussain Sab, Rep. by their GPA holder M/s. Achal Developers Represented by its Partners Sri. Chaitanya Revankar & Sri. Achaldas T Revankar having its office at No. 148, 3rd Floor, 9th Main, 17th Cross, HSR Layout sector-6, Bangalore. If any persons, banks, financial institutions etc., having any claims, right, title and interest whatsoever over the schedule property may forward their objections to the undersigned in writing with supporting documents of your such claims, within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which it will be deemed that there are no claims, right, title and interest by anybody and my client will proceed for completion of sale transaction and thereafter no claims will be considered.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

BDA Residential property bearing Site No. 11, BDA Khata No. 6000084865 in Layout Known as "SIMHACHALUM" formed in converted land bearing Old Sy. No. 114, Later Sy. No. 114/4 and New Sy. No. 114/6, Vide approved Layout Plan and site release order No. BDA/ TPM/ PRL-74/24-25/1007/2025-26 dated 29-05-2025, situated at Maragondanahalli Village, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk, measuring East to West 12.19 Sq. Mtrs and North to South 9.14 Sq. Mtrs in total measuring 111.41 Sq. Mtrs. and bounded on the: East by : 9.14M Road, West by : Plot No. 6, North by : Plot No. 12, South by : Plot No. 10.

MANJUNATHA & ASSOCIATES
K. N. MANJUNATHA CHARY, ROOPA. B, & B.N. JAGADISH KUMAR, Advocates, #1010, 2nd Floor, 7th A Main Road, 1st Block, Koramangala, Bangalore - 560034, Mob: 9845965626, 7406090832
Bangalore, Date : 01-04-2026

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar Bengaluru - 560 009. Phone No. 080-22265383, website: www.kiadb.in

No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-01/04/2026-27 Date: 01.04.2026

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item Rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited as per the Karnataka Transparency Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible KPWD Class-1 (Civil) Contractors who have got adequate financial resources, state of the art technology, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience in the following work :

Name of the Work : Establishment of Knowledge, Wellbeing and Innovation City (KWIN City) of Phase-4 & Phase-5, Doddaballapura & Nelamangala Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **02.05.2026** upto **4.00 pm.**

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

DIPR/CP /19/Zen/2026-27

Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru

KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAM LIMITED

(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
Office of the Executive Engineer, KNNL, SLIS, Division No. 1, Mundargi, Gadag Dist.
Ph No. 08371-295016, e-mail: eeslis1mdg@gmail.com

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(ONLY THROUGH "KPP-Procurement" SYSTEM)

Reference : 1) This office Tender Notification No : 1637 & 1638 Dated : 31.03.2026
2) This office Tender Notification No : 1639 to 1646 Dated : 31.03.2026
3) This office Tender Notification No : 1647 & 1648 Dated : 31.03.2026
4) This office Tender Notification No : 1649 & 1650 Dated : 31.03.2026
5) This office Tender Notification No : 1651 Dated : 31.03.2026.
6) This office Tender Notification No : 1652 Dated : 31.03.2026

Tenders in Electronic mode are invited in KPP-Portal on behalf of the Managing Director, KNNL, Bengaluru, by the Executive Engineer, KNNL, SLIS Division No.1, Mundargi, Gadag District from the eligible Tenderers who are fulfilled the terms and conditions mentioned as in Tender Notifications cited at reference (1) to (6) above. The tender having Indent No. **4274, 4276, 4307, 4302, 4297, 4305, 4306, 4301, 4298 & 4300** are comes under General Category, Indent No. **4274 & 4276** are reserved for SC Category, Indent No. **4304 & 4299** are reserved for Category-II(A), Indent No. **4270** is reserved for ST Category and Indent No. 4308 is reserved for Category-I Contractors.

Accordingly, The amount put to tender these works are varies from **Rs. 3.54** Lakh to **Rs. 126.27** Lakh (Including GST), and EMD amount varies from **Rs. 7500**/- to **Rs. 2.00** Lakh respectively.

Therefore, The bidders can access this tender in **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** website from **31.03.2026** and the last date of submission for the tender is **16.04.2026** and date of opening of Technical Bid **17.04.2026.** A Pre-bid meeting for Indent No.**4296** is held on **08.04.2026** at **11:45** AM in at Office of Executive Engineer, KNNL SLIS Division No.01 Mundaragi.

Further bidders are hereby by instructed to contact or visit the below mentioned office in working hours regarding Terms and Conditions of the tender and for furthermore information please contact KPP-Procurement Helpdesk Phone Numbers: 080-46010000, 080-68948777, 09240214000 & 09240214001. Conditional tenders are liable to be rejected. The officer competent to accept the tender shall have the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

DIPR/Gadag/KSMCA/01/2026-27

Sd/- Executive Engineer, KNNL, SLIS Division No-1, Mundargi, Gadag (Dist)

RAICHUR POWER CORPORATION LIMITED

(YERAMARUS THERMAL POWER STATION)
(A JV Company of KPCL & BHEL)
CIN : U40101KA2009PLC049582

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPP Portal Only)

RPCL invites bids through KPP Portal: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Under **"GOODS" / "WORKS"** category from reputed bidders for the following works. **1) KPCL/2025-26/IND2494/CALL-2, Date: 25.03.2026.** Supply of 90KL of LDO IS:15770(2008) through Road Tankers required for Yermaras Thermal Power Station.

2) KPCL/2025-26/PS/WORK_INDENT3884/CALL-2, Date: 23.03.2026. YTPS CHP-REFURBISHMENT, REPAIR, RECTIFICATION OF TEN NUMBERS OF NON-DRIVE PULLEYS".

Last Date & Time for bid submission along with Technical & Financial bid (Part I & II) is on: **04.04.2026 upto 17:30 Hrs.** Any further details can be obtained from the office of the **Executive Engineer(M-2), RPCL, Yermarus Thermal Power Station, Yermarus - 584134, Raichur District.** Tele/Fax: **08532-286003.** Mobile: **+91-8277502840.** E-mail: **eechpmytpskpcl@karnataka.gov.in**

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

SUPPLY OF STORES ITEMS "THROUGH E- PROCUREMENT TENDERS"

TENDER NOTICE No: S/2026/13 **Date : 30.03.2026**

The Principal Chief Material Manager, North Western Railway, headquarter Jaipur, for and on behalf of the President of India invites Open E-tenders on **www.ireps.gov.in** site as follows.

CORRIGENDUM

Sr. No.	Tender No.	NIT No.	Brief Description	TOD	
				Existing	Read as
1	65265004	S/2026/09 Dt. 12.03.2026	Design, Manufacture, supply, erection, testing and commissioning of Rail cum road vehicle 600T	01.04.2026	15.04.2026
2	37264705	S/2026/11 Dt.- 25.03.2026	Overhauling kit	04.05.2026	23.04.2026
3	80250004A	S/2026/07 Dt.- 02.03.2026	Crank case oil SAE 15 W40 API CH4 for use in demu engines confirming to CES20076	24.03.2026	14.04.2026

Note: (1) Interested tenderers may visit the website **www.ireps.gov.in** for Full details/description/ Specification/ EMD & tender cost etc. All tenderers are requested to obtain digital signatures and get them registered on above site and quote electronically only. **(2)** For viewing and participating in other tenders such as open tender costing below Rs. 50 Lakh, limited tenders, special limited tenders and low value tenders, please visit **www.ireps.gov.in**

472-AR/26 **AMM/IV** **Principal Chief Material Manager/NWR/JP**

KARNATAKA STATE POLICE HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD.

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
#59, Richmond Road (Gen K.S. Thimmaiah Road),
Bengaluru-25. Ph: 080-25584102 / 25594893
Email: eecontractksphc@gmail.com Website: www.ksphc.org

No: EE/KSPH&IDCL/CNT/TND/02/2026-27/01/01 Date: 01.04.2026

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

KSPH & IDCL invites online tender as per KTPP 2000 Act & as per Standard Tender Document through KPPP **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** for the below PMC works.

01 Construction of Chikkabanavara Police Station, Traffic Police Station and ACP Sub-division office building in Bengaluru.

02 Repair and Renovation of front and back quarantine at District Prison, Karwar in U.K. District.

03 Providing Wooden Storage Unit to Technical Section (North & South) SE PA Room, SE Chamber and Motor Transport Section at Head Office, KSPH&IDCL, Bengaluru.

Interested eligible contractors may participate in the tendering process. The details such as Tender fee, EMD, Tender documents etc., are available on KPPP from **02.04.2026 onwards.**

"KSPH & IDCL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Bids without assigning any reasons."

Note: Henceforth any changes / modifications in the Tender will be updated only on KPPP.

DIPR/CP/YC/11/2026-27

Sd/- Executive Engineer - Contracts

CLASSIFIEDS MART

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www.thehinduads.com
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Mangaluru: 0824-2417575 • 2417580
Hubballi: 0836-2338600 • 2335700

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Prasad Sudhakar Shetty, S/o Sudhakar Shetty, R/at No.48, Dr. V.K.Gokak Road, Near Maruthi Circle, Hanumantha Nagar, Bengaluru-560019, have changed my name from Prasada Sudhakara Shetty to Prasad Sudhakar Shetty vide affidavit dated 27-03-2026 sworn before Notary Gangaraju, B.N., Bengaluru.

We, Iyaz Ahmed and Syeda Humera Talath, r/at #19, Balappa Compound, 1st Cross, Arokiamma Layout, Venkateshpuram, Bengaluru 560045 have changed our daughter's name from Zikramariam to Zikra Mariam vide affidavit dtd 07.03.2026 sworn before Notary L.Gopalakrishna, Bluru

CORRECTION OF NAME – I, Aditya Gautam S/O SK Singh R/O Vignan Nagar Bangalore–37 declare that my name is spelled incorrectly in my Driving License as ADITTYA GAUTAM; to be corrected to ADITYA GAUTAM vide Affidavit IN–KA21834178918883Y sworn before Notary Deepa M. For correction of name in Driving License purpose only.

REAL ESTATE

✔ **5BHK VILLA** for SALE near Indiranagar 4500+ Sq.Ft. with 1 Cr worth Interiors + Pvt Lift, Jacuzzi, Walk-in Wardrobe, Party Terrace, Private Gym, 4 Car Parks Exclusive Gated Community Rs. 8.3 Cr. Direct Sale. Call: 9886523078.

PUBLIC NOTICE

A Fund ("Fund") in the venture capital sector, registered with the Securities and Exchange Board of India as a Category I Alternative Investment Fund – Venture Capital Fund under the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Alternative Investment Funds) Regulations, 2012, invite expression of interest for acquisition of units of the Fund which are available on an "as is, where is" basis. The invitation for bids is for a minimum of 25% of the units of the fund, representing the consolidated value of unliquidated investments in the fund's investment portfolio. Interested parties can reach out at the contact details mentioned below, post which they will be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement in order to receive further information on these unlisted securities. The last date for receiving bids from interested parties is 10 days from the date of this notice. We reserve the right to cancel this invitation and/or invite fresh applications with or without amendments to this invitation, without any liability/obligation for such invitation, and without assigning any reason.

Contact Details –
me.bidsforunits@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

In the matter of **M/s. Schiefflin Institute of Health-Research & Leprosy Centre** having its registered office at No. S.I.H.-R & L.C. SLRS PO., Karigiri, Vellore District, Tamil Nadu, India - 632106.

Kind Attention:

- **State Bank of India,** Corporate Office, State Bank Bhavan, Madame Cama Road, Nariman Point, Mumbai - 400021.
- **Bank of Baroda,** Nariman Point Branch, Jagannath Bhosle Road, Mumbai - 400021.
- **Catholic Syrian Bank Ltd.,** Door No.493, Ward No.43, Cross Cut Road, Coimbatore - 641012.

NOTICE is hereby given that the company has not availed any Loan facility from any of the three Banks mentioned above from the date of incorporation and hence the Company shall file an application with the Registrar of Companies Chennai to remove the Charges appearing the Ministry of Corporate affairs portal and in case any person whose interest is likely to be affected due to this process may deliver or cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his interest and grounds of opposition to the Registrar of Companies, Chennai Ministry of Corporate affairs, 2nd floor, Shastri Bhavan, 26, Haddows Road, Chennai-600006 within fourteen (14) days from the date of publication of this notice, and send a copy of the said documents to the applicant company registered office address:- S.I.H.-R & L.C. SLRS PO., Karigiri, Vellore District, Tamil Nadu, India -632106.

-For and on behalf of
Schiefflin Institute of Health-Research and Leprosy Centre
Sd/-...
JERRY JOSHUA
Managing Director
DIN: 08251243

Place: Vellore
Date: 02.04.2026

PULSE CHECK

GETTY IMAGES

Qdenga: a step forward against dengue, but not a silver bullet

India's first dengue vaccine offers hope at reducing severe disease even as evolving viral patterns warrant cautious optimism; the vaccine is best understood as one that modifies the disease rather than blocks transmission, meaning outbreaks will not disappear

Vipin M. Vashishtha

India's long wait for a dengue vaccine may finally be coming to an end. Takeda's tetravalent dengue vaccine, TAK-003 (called 'Qdenga'), recently received clearance from the Subject Expert Committee (SEC) under the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for use among individuals aged 4 to 60 years. This marks a significant milestone in the country's fight against a disease that causes millions of infections and thousands of hospitalisations every year, especially among children.

While India has not experienced a large nationwide dengue surge in the past year, the disease remains endemic, with substantial transmission and a long-term rising trend. For decades, dengue control in India relied almost entirely on vector control measures such as eliminating mosquito breeding sites, insecticide use, and public awareness campaigns. While essential, these strategies have had limited success in preventing recurring outbreaks. The arrival of a vaccine, therefore, represents a shift from a reactive to a more preventive approach.

TAK-003 comes with several advantages. It has been evaluated in large global trials involving more than 28,000 participants and has already been approved in more than 40 countries. Importantly, unlike an earlier dengue vaccine, it does not require pre-vaccination screening to determine prior dengue infection, making it simpler to use in real-world settings. The vaccine has also demonstrated good safety and, crucially, strong protection against severe dengue and hospitalisation – both outcomes that matter the most in clinical practice.

In a country like India, where healthcare systems are often stretched during dengue seasons, even a modest reduction in the number of severe cases could have a substantial impact. Fewer hospital admissions, reduced intensive care burden, and lower mortality in children and adolescents would all represent meaningful gains.

Challenges and limitations

However, it is equally important to recognise what this vaccine can and cannot achieve. Dengue is caused by four closely related but distinct viruses, known as serotypes (DENV-1 to DENV-4). Immunity to one serotype does not guarantee protection against the others, and in some cases, can even predispose an individual to more severe disease upon subsequent infection. This makes developing a vaccine for dengue uniquely challenging: an effective vaccine must provide balanced protection against all four serotypes.

Herein lies a key limitation of TAK-003. While it performs very well against the DENV-2 serotype, since it was developed on the DENV-2 backbone, and reasonably well against DENV-1, its effectiveness against DENV-3 and DENV-4 appears to be lower – particularly in individuals who have not previously been infected with dengue.

This is not merely a theoretical concern. India's dengue epidemiology is evolving, with increasing reports of DENV-3 becoming more prominent in several regions.

Recent data from India also show that all four dengue serotypes continue to co-circulate, with DENV-2 still predominant in many regions but DENV-3 contributing a substantial and increasing proportion of cases.

For instance, surveillance from North and Western India has reported DENV-2 accounting for around 48-66% of cases, followed by DENV-3 at around 20-30%, with DENV-1 and DENV-4 contributing smaller shares.

If this trend continues, the overall effectiveness of the vaccine at a population level may be lower than expected. In simple terms, while vaccinated individuals are still likely to be protected from severe disease, they may continue to experience dengue infections, especially during outbreaks dominated by DENV-3.

This distinction is crucial. TAK-003 is best understood as a vaccine that modifies the disease rather than as one that blocks transmission. In other words, it is likely to reduce the severity of illness rather than prevent infection altogether. As a result, dengue outbreaks will not disappear and public health measures such as vector control will remain indispensable.

Another important consideration is cost and access. Dengue vaccines are expected to be relatively expensive, and TAK-003 requires two doses administered three months apart. The expected price of TAK-003 in India is likely ₹3,000-6,000 per dose and ₹6,000-12,000 for the full course. While public programmes may offer the shots at lower prices, questions about affordability and compliance – particularly among lower-income and rural populations – remain unanswered. At least in the initial years, uptake is likely to be limited to the private sector or targeted programmes in areas with a high burden of dengue.

The SEC has appropriately mandated post-marketing safety and effectiveness studies in the Indian population. These will be critical to understand how the vaccine performs in real-world conditions, across different regions and serotype patterns.

Looking ahead, TAK-003 may be only the first step in India's dengue vaccine journey. A second generation of vaccines, based on a different scientific approach developed by the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), is currently under evaluation.

Indian pipeline

India's dengue vaccine pipeline is advancing, with an indigenous candidate called 'DengiAll', developed by Panacea Biotec in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research, currently undergoing large phase III clinical trials.

A similar vaccine has already been approved in Brazil and it has shown strong protection against severe dengue. If the Indian candidate is also successful, it could be available around 2027. These vaccines aim to provide more balanced protection across all four serotypes and may offer the additional advantage of a single-dose regimen.

Early data from similar vaccines tested elsewhere are also promising, particularly in terms of protecting against severe dengue and broader serotype coverage. If these findings are confirmed in Indian trials, such vaccines could be better suited for large-scale public health deployment.

For policymakers, the challenge will be to balance urgency with prudence. There is a clear and immediate need to reduce the burden of severe dengue and TAK-003 is a valuable tool with which to achieve this. At the same time, the long-term strategy must remain flexible, allowing for the country to adopt better vaccines as the evidence evolves.

For clinicians, clear communication will be essential. Their own and their patients' expectations need to be realistic: the vaccine is not a cure-all but it is a meaningful step forward. Even if it does not eliminate dengue, it can save lives and reduce complications.

Ultimately, the introduction of a dengue vaccine in India should be seen not as the culmination of efforts but as the beginning of a new phase. Success will depend not only on the vaccine itself but also on how well it is integrated with surveillance, vector control, and future innovations.

In public health, progress often comes incrementally. TAK-003 may not be the final answer to dengue in India but it is undoubtedly an important start.

(Vipin M. Vashishtha is director and paediatrician, Mangla Hospital and Research Centre, Bijnor)

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

March, which was very eventful, ended on Tuesday, and here is a quiz on the events that shaped the month in 2026

Sindhu Nagaraj

QUESTION 1

The Abiemnom massacre took place in Abiemnom on March 1. It was perpetrated by unidentified armed youth from the neighbouring Unity State. Abiemnon is a part of which country?

QUESTION 2

Identify this country: This is an island in the Eastern Basin of the Mediterranean Sea. Geographically, it is located in West Asia, but the country is considered a European country in political geography. On March 3, British PM Keir Starmer said he approved the deployment of a warship to the island to protect it from further Iranian attacks.

QUESTION 3

The Rastriya Swatantra Party wins 124 direct seats and leads in one more from 164 of 165 constituencies reported so far in Nepal, in results announced on March 8. Who eventually took the oath as the PM of the Himalayan nation?

QUESTION 4

India, on March 8, won the 2026 Men's T20 World Cup. Apart from becoming the first team to win back-to-back T20 World Cups, and the first team to win the tournament three times, which other milestone did the team cross?

QUESTION 5

Which country experienced blackouts in March owing to a series of interruptions to the nationwide electrical service?

QUESTION 6

Who on March 29 became the youngest driver to lead the World Championship at 19 years and 216 days old after winning the Japanese Grand Prix?

Visual Question:
Identify this musician who won the Academy Award for Best Original Score on March 15.

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:

1. Which ancient Roman spring festival is sometimes proposed as a precursor to April Fools' traditions? **Ans: Hilaria**
2. In France and several Francophone regions, what name is given to the person tricked on April 1, traditionally marked by secretly attaching a paper fish to their back? **Ans: Poisson d'avril ("April fish")**
3. Which Renaissance writer recorded early French references to April-1 foolery in his satirical works? **Ans: Eloy d'Amerval**
4. In a famous April Fools' radio prank in 1976, which planet was falsely said to align with Pluto and briefly reduce gravity on Earth? **Ans: Jupiter (in the hoax broadcast by Patrick Moore)**
5. Which medieval English poet's work contains one of the earliest debated references to an April-1 style prank? **Ans: Geoffrey Chaucer in The Canterbury Tales**

Visual: This 19th-century ticket invites visitors to which famous April Fools' hoax? **Ans: The "Washing the Lions" hoax. Fake invitations sent people to the Tower of London to witness a nonexistent ceremony**

Early Birds: K.N. Viswanathan | Sukdev Shet | Sunil Madhavan | Tito Shiladitya | Sonali Das

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

"How was your day?"

"As usual, I had a fight with Sujatha."

"What was the fight about?"

"This one had to do with 'good name'. I asked Sujatha's cousin from the U.S. what his good name was and he burst out laughing. Sujatha said that his good name was Rahul and his bad name was Bala."

"That must have made you mad."

"It certainly did. Anyway, what was wrong with the question I had asked?"

"You see, native speakers of English don't say, 'What's your good name?' They ask you for your 'name', not your 'good name'."

"You mean it's wrong to say, 'What's your good name?'"

"It's quite common within India. But native speakers of English don't use it."

"Then why do we say it?"

"I think it's the mother tongue influence. I have a feeling that 'What's your good name?' is actually a translation of how the question is asked in Hindi. Of course, there may be other Indian languages which ask you for your 'good name' as well."

"That's interesting. But do you mean to say that native speakers of English never use the expression 'good name'?"

"The expression 'good name' is used to refer to one's 'reputation'. For example, if someone says 'You have ruined the good name of the family', it means...."

"...it means you have ruined the family's reputation."

"Yes!"

"While we are on the subject of 'good name', is it wrong to say 'good self'?"

"I thought there was only one 'Self' for everyone to try to realise!"

"What are you talking about?"

"Just a little philosophy. But never mind. Native speakers of English seldom use 'good self'. It is considered rather old fashioned. If at all used, it is used in formal contexts. Usually in writing."

"I see. When writing to my uncle or my cousin, I shouldn't use 'good self'?"

"Just say 'you'."

"I see. But can I say, I am sending my bio-data to your good self too...."

"...that's another word that's common among native speakers of English."

"Which word are you talking about?"

"Bio-data! They usually call it a 'resume' or 'curriculum vitae'."

"What?"

"R.e.s.u.m.e."

"That's pronounced reSUME, right?"

"You are thinking of the word, which means to start something again. That is pronounced reSUME."

"The game resumed after the break."

"That's a good example. A resume, on the other hand, is what we in India call a bio-data. That's one of the meanings, anyway. It's a summary."

"What's the other term which is used?"

"Curriculum vitae. The 'u' in the first and last syllables is like the 'a' in 'china'. The 'i' is like the 'i' in words like 'bit', 'kit', and 'pit'. The 'cu' sounds like the letter 'Q'. The stress is on the second syllable. It's pronounced cuRRIculum."

"How is v.i.t.a.e pronounced?"

"The 'i' in the first syllable is like the 'ee' in words like 'bee', 'fee', and 'see'. And the 'ae' in the second syllable is like the 'ie' in words like 'die', 'tie', and 'pie'. The stress is on the first syllable. The word is pronounced VITae."

"Which word has the main stress?"

"Vitae has the main stress."

"Curriculum vitae! That's a mouthful."

Published in The Hindu on February 29, 2000

Word of the day

Coterie:
an exclusive circle of people with a common purpose

Synonyms:
crowd, network, community

Usage: *The politician relied on a coterie of advisers.*

Pronunciation:
newsth.live/coterie

International Phonetic Alphabet: /kəʊtəri/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

FORM NO. CAA. 2

[Pursuant to Section 230 (3) and rule 6 and 7)]

BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL BENCH

AT KOCHI

CA(CAA)/2/KOB/2026

IN THE MATTER OF SECTION 232 READ WITH SECTION 230 OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2013 AND IN THE MATTER OF AMALGAMATION OF AESTHETIC GOLD ORNAMENTS PRIVATE LIMITED AND 50 OTHER TRANSFEROR COMPANIES (TRANSFEROR COMPANIES) WITH MALABAR GOLD AND DIAMONDS LIMITED (TRANSFEREE COMPANY)

AESTHETIC GOLD ORNAMENTS PRIVATE LIMITED

CIN: U36911KL2009PTC024370

Having its registered office at 16/501 M, Montana Estate,

Paingottupuram, Peringolam (PO), Kozhikode, Kerala - 673571

Represented by its Authorised Signatory Mr. Rajeevan Nair

Ph: 8714585916 ; Email: rajeevan.nair@malabargroup.com

and 50 other Companies (having their registered office at the same address above) as detailed in the table given below Represented by Authorised Signatory Mr. Rajeevan Nair)

Applicant Companies No. 1 to 51 / Transferor Companies No.1 to 51

&

MALABAR GOLD AND DIAMONDS LIMITED

(formerly known as MALABAR GOLD LIMITED)

CIN: U52393KL2001PLC014804

Having its registered office at 16/501 M, Montana Estate,

Paingottupuram, Peringolam (PO), Kozhikode, Kerala - 673571

Represented by its Authorised Signatory Mr.Rajeevan Nair (Company Secretary)

Ph: 8714585916 ; Email: rajeevan.nair@malabargroup.com

Applicant Company No.52 / Transferee Company

(hereinafter referred to as Applicant Companies)

Notice and Advertisement of Notice of the Meeting of Equity Shareholders / Unsecured Creditors / Secured Creditors

Notice is hereby given that by an Order dated 25th March 2026, the Kochi Bench of the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal ("Tribunal") ("Tribunal Order") has directed for separate meetings to be held at 16/501 M, Montana Estate, Paingottupuram, Peringolam (PO), Kozhikode, Kerala – 673571 for the Equity Shareholders / Unsecured Creditors / Secured Creditors of the respective Applicant Companies for the purpose of considering, and if thought fit, approving with or without modification, the Scheme of Amalgamation ("Scheme") proposed to be made between the Applicant Companies and their respective shareholders and creditors under Section 230 to 232 of the Companies Act 2013 ("Act") and other applicable provisions of the Act read with the Companies(Compromises, Arrangements and Amalgamations) Rules, 2016 ("Rules").

The details of the meetings of the Applicant Companies to be held as per the aforesaid order is as follows :-

Meeting of the Transferor Companies :-

Sr.No.	Name of Company	Chairpersons	Scrutinizers	Date & Time of Equity Shareholders Meeting	Date & Time of Secured Creditors' Meeting	Date & Time of Unsecured Creditors' Meeting
1	MBMG Diamonds Private Limited CIN:U36911KL2008PTC022587	Mr. Arun Chandy, Advocate	Mr. Vivek Kumar, CS	NA	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Monday 4th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 4th May 2026
2	MGD Holdings Private Limited CIN: 51909KL2012PTC030985	Mr. Arun Chandy, Advocate	Mr. Vivek Kumar, CS	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 4th May 2026	NA	NA
3	Riches Jewel Arcade Private Limited CIN:U47733KL2024PTC089169	Mr. Rajasekhar V.K, Former Member (Judicial), NCLT	Mr. Abhilash Nediyalil Abraham, CS	NA	04.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 4th May 2026	5.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 4th May 2026
4	Blaze Gold Jewels Private Limited CIN:U36911KL2009PTC024369	Mr. Anil Kumar, Former Member (Technical), NCLT	Mr. Shawn Jeff Christopher, CA	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 4th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 4th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Monday 4th May 2026
5	Blossom Gold Collections Private Limited CIN:U52393KL2009PTC024506	Mr Anil Kumar, Former Member (Technical), NCLT	Mr. Shawn Jeff Christopher, CA	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 4th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 5th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 5th May 2026
6	Ecomate Packaging Private Limited CIN:U82920KL2024PTC090890	Mr. Madhukuttan Pillai KB	Mr. Allen Thomas Joseph, CA	NA	NA	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 4th May 2026
7	Emerald Gold Souk (India) Private Limited CIN:U52393KL2009PTC023863	Mr. Madhukuttan Pillai KB	Mr. Allen Thomas Joseph, CA	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 5th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 5th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 5th May 2026
8	Gehana Gold Palace Private Limited CIN:U51398KL2007PTC020985	Mr Mukesh Kumar Gupta, Former Member (Judicial), CAT, Vice- Chairman (Judicial), RCT	Mr. Ansh Kakar, CS	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 5th May 2026	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 5th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 6th May 2026
9	Glisten Gold Collections Private Limited CIN:U52393KL2008PTC022635	Mr Mukesh Kumar Gupta, Former Member (Judicial), CAT, Vice- Chairman (Judicial), RCT	Mr. Ansh Kakar, CS	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 6th May 2026	1.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 6th May 2026	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 6th May 2026
10	Malabar Ornaments Private Limited CIN:U51398KL2003PTC016237	Mr Kevin Thomas Advocate	Mr. Dileep KP, CA	12.00 Pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 6th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 6th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 6th May 2026
11	Malabar Packaging Private Limited CIN:U74999KL2021PTC072010	Mr Kevin Thomas, Advocate	Mr. Dileep KP, CA	NA	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 7th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Thursday 7th May 2026
12	Malabar Cochin Arcade Private Limited CIN:U45202KL2007PTC020490	Mr C V Bimal Roy, Advocate	Mr. John Vadaserry, CS	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 6th May 2026	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 6th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 7th May 2026
13	Malabar Collections Private Limited CIN:U51398KL2003PTC016458	Mr C V Bimal Roy, Advocate	Mr. John Vadaserry, CS	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Thursday 7th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 7th May 2026	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 7th May 2026
14	Malabar Creations Private Limited CIN: 51398KL2004PTC017157	Mr K Ashokan, Retired Sessions Judge, Former Presiding Officer, DRT	Mr. Balakrishnan Baburaj, CS	11.00 am by Hybrid mode on Thursday 7th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Thursday 7th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 7th May 2026
15	Malabar Crystals and Diamonds Private Limited CIN:U52393KL2006PTC019273	Mr K Ashokan, Retired Sessions Judge, Former Presiding Officer, DRT	Mr. Balakrishnan Baburaj, CS	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 7th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Friday 8th May 2026	11.00 am by Hybrid mode on Friday 8th May 2026
16	Malabar Dazzle India Private Limited CIN:U52393KL2007PTC020264	Mr Varun Chugh, Advocate	Mr. Allen Bosco, CA	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Friday 8th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 8th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 9th May 2026
17	Malabar Diamond Gallery Private Limited CIN: U52393KL2006PTC019952	Mr Varun Chugh, Advocate	Mr. Allen Bosco, CA	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 8th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 8th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 9th May 2026
18	Malabar Equipments and General Traders Private Limited CIN: U52599KL2006PTC020129	Mr Alok Kumar Shukla, IRS, Former Member (Technical), RCT	Mr. George Varkey, CA	NA	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 8th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Friday 8th May 2026
19	Malabar Gold Jewels (Tirur) Private Limited CIN: U52393KL2005PTC018333	Mr Alok Kumar Shukla, IRS, Former Member (Technical), RCT	Mr. George Varkey, CA	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 8th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 9th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Saturday 9th May 2026
20	Malabar Gold Palace Private Limited CIN: U52393KL2005PTC018265	Ms Vandhana Kohli, Advocate	Mr. Padma Kumar KC, CA	3.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 8th May 2026	11.00 am by Hybrid mode on Friday 8th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 8th May 2026
21	Malabar Gold Super Market (Kannur) Private Limited CIN: U36911KL2005PTC018335	Ms Vandhana Kohli, Advocate	Mr. Padma Kumar KC, CA	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Saturday 9th May 2026	1.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 9th May 2026	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 9th May 2026
22	Thas Displays Private Limited CIN:U23933KL2024PTC090845	Ms Rehana Shukkur, Advocate	Mr Lukose Joseph, CA	NA	NA	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 11th May 2026
23	TN Thangamaaligai Private Limited CIN: U47733KL2024PTC089208	Ms Rehana Shukkur, Advocate	Mr Lukose Joseph, CA	3.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 11th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 11th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Monday 11th May 2026
24	Prosper Jewel Arcade Private Limited CIN: U47733KL2024PTC090980	Mr. Rahul Prasad Bhatnagar, Former Member (Judicial), NCLT	Mr. Krishnan Unni, CS	NA	3.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 11th May 2026	5.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 11th May 2026
25	Malabar International Gold Designs Private Limited CIN:U52393KL2006PTC019222	Mr. Vishawjeet Singh, Advocate	Mr. Vibin Vincent, CA	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 12th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 12th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 12th May 2026
26	Malabar Jewels and Gems Private Limited CIN:U51398KL2003PTC016082	Mr. Vishawjeet Singh, Advocate	Mr. Vibin Vincent, CA	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 12th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 13th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 13th May 2026
27	Malabar Kodungallur Sona Bazar Private Limited CIN: U52393KL2007PTC020906	Mr. S M Ameerul Millath Former RD, Ministry of Corporate Affairs	Mr. Ruben George Joseph, CA	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 12th May 2026	3.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 12th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 12th May 2026
28	Malabar Mangalore Arcade Private Limited CIN: U45202KL2005PTC018334	Mr. S M Ameerul Millath, Former RD, Ministry of Corporate Affairs	Mr. Ruben George Joseph, CA	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 12th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 13th May 2026	5.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 12th May 2026
29	Travancore Gold India Private Limited CIN:U52393KL2008PTC022607	Mr. Pradeep Joy, Advocate	Mr P T Joy, CA	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 13th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 12th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 12th May 2026
30	Unify Retail Ventures Limited CIN: U46498KL2025PLC092747	Mr. Pradeep Joy, Advocate	Mr P T Joy, CA	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 13th May 2026	NA	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 13th May 2026
31	Malabar Precious Jewels (India) Private Limited CIN:U52393KL2006PTC019223	Mr. Cyriac Tom, Advocate	Mr. Raju PK, CA	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 13th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 13th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 13th May 2026
32	Malabar Retna Mahal Private Limited CIN: U52393KL2006PTC019295	Mr. Cyriac Tom, Advocate	Mr. Raju PK, CA	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 13th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 14th May 2026	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 14th May 2026
33	Eminent Jewel Arcade Private Limited CIN: U51398KL2010PTC026078	Mr. K.V. Sachidanandan, Former Member (Judicial), CAT	Mr. Parameshwaran Nair, CA	1.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 14th May 2026	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 13th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Wednesday 13th May 2026
34	Fort-In Infragold Collections Private Limited CIN:U47733KL2024PTC089168	Mr. K.V. Sachidanandan, Former Member (Judicial), CAT	Mr. Parameshwaran Nair, CA	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 14th May 2026	3.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 14th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Thursday 14th May 2026
35	Northern Gold Collection Private Limited CIN: U47733KL2024PTC089167	Mr. A. C. Venugopal, Advocate	Mr. Prashant Mohan, CS	NA	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 14th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026
36	Palatial Gold Ornaments Private Limited CIN: U51398KL2010PTC025426	Mr. A. C. Venugopal, Advocate	Mr. Prashant Mohan, CS	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 14th May 2026	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026
37	Patina Gold Ornaments Private Limited CIN: U52393KL2008PTC022493	Mr. Vinod P V, Advocate	Ms. Midhuna K C, CS	1.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026	4.00 pm by Hybri mode on Friday 15th May 2026
38	Prominent Jewel Arcade Private Limited CIN: U51398KL2010PTC026091	Mr. Vinod P V, Advocate	Ms. Midhuna K C, CS	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Thursday 14th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 14th May 2026
39	Sheen Golden Jewels (India) Private Limited CIN: U36911KL2009PTC024368	Mr. Sherry Samuel Oomen, Advocate	Mr. Yogindunath, CS	11.00 am by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026	3.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026
40	Swarna Kamal Jewels (India) Private Limited CIN: U52393KL2008PTC022562	Mr. Sherry Samuel Oomen, Advocate	Mr. Yogindunath, CS	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026	1.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026	5.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026
41	Unity Jewel Arcade Private Limited CIN: U51398KL2010PTC026164	Ms. Varsha K Balakrishnan, Advocate	Mr. Madhusudhanan E P, CS	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Friday 15th May 2026
42	Vajra Creations Private Limited CIN: U52393KL2007PTC021037	Ms Varsha K Balakrishnan, Advocate	Mr. Madhusudhanan E P, CS	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026	11.00 am by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026	1.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026
43	Aesthetic Gold Ornaments Private Limited CIN: U36911KL2009PTC024370	Mr. H.V. Subba Rao, Former Member (Judicial), NCLT	Mr. Sreenivasan P R, CA	NA	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026	11.00 am by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026
44	Al-Ahali Business Trade Links Private Limited CIN: U36911KL1997PTC011338	Mr. H.V. Subba Rao, Former Member (Judicial), NCLT	Mr. Sreenivasan P R, CA	1.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026	3.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026
45	Luster Gold Palace (India) Private Limited CIN: U52393KL2007PTC021369	Mr. N.S. Gopakumar, Former Member (Judicial), RCT	Mr. Nikhil George Pinto, CS	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026	1.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026
46	Malabar Business Centre Private Limited CIN: U70101KL1958PTC001812	Mr. N.S. Gopakumar, Former Member (Judicial), RCT	Mr. Nikhil George Pinto, CS	3.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026	5.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Saturday 16th May 2026
47	Splendour Gold Collections Private Limited CIN: U47733KL2024PTC091224	Mr. P. Mohan Raj, Former Member (Judicial), NCLT	Mr. Ramachandran Thekkumkadu Madathil, CS	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 18th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 18th May 2026	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Monday 18th May 2026
48	Malabar Royal Designs (Hyderabad) Private Limited CIN:U52393KL2005PTC018793	Mr Akhil Suresh, Advocate	Mr. K K Jose, CA	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Monday 18th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 18th May 2026	4.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 18th May 2026
49	Malabar Ruby Private Limited CIN:U52393KL2007PTC020142	Mr Akhil Suresh, Advocate	Mr. K K Jose, CA	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 18th May 2026	3.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 18th May 2026	5.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Monday 18th May 2026
50	Sparkle Gold Retail Ventures Ltd CIN: U47733KL2025PLC096457	Mr Venkata Ramakrishn Badrinath Nandula, Former Member (Judicial), NCLT	Mr. P.D. Vincent, CS	10.00 am by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 19th May 2026	12.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 19th May 2026	2.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Tuesday 19th May 2026

Meeting of the Transferee Company :-

Name of Company	Chairpersons	Scrutinizers	Date & Time of Equity Shareholders Meeting	Date & Time of Secured Creditors' Meeting	Date & Time of Unsecured Creditors' Meeting
Malabar Gold and Diamonds Limited (CIN:U52393KL2001PLC014804	Mr Kuldip Kumar Kareer, Former Member (Judicial), NCLT	Mr. Rajmohan R, CA, CS	11.00 am by Hybrid mode on Thursday 14th May 2026	1.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 14th May 2026	3.00 pm by Hybrid mode on Thursday 14th May 2026

In pursuance of the said Order and as directed therein, further notice is hereby given that meeting of the Equity Shareholders / Unsecured Creditors / Secured Creditors of the aforesaid Applicant Companies shall be held in Hybrid mode at the Registered office of the Applicant Companies at the time mentioned in the Table above at which time the Equity Shareholders / Unsecured Creditors / Secured Creditors are requested to attend the meeting.

Notice of the meeting ("Notice") together with the statement required to be furnished pursuant to Sections 230 to 232 of the Act and Rule 6 of the Companies (Compromises, Arrangements and Amalgamations) Rules, 2016, shall be served to the respective Equity Shareholders / Unsecured Creditors / Secured Creditors of the Applicant Companies as per the Tribunal Order.

The Notice convening the aforesaid meetings along with Copies of the said Scheme and of the Statement under Sections 230 read with 232 and 102 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 6 of the Companies (Compromises, Arrangements and Amalgamations) Rules, 2016 ("Rules") can be obtained free of charge at the Registered Office of the Applicant Companies or at the Office of its Authorized Representatives being Messrs KSR & Co Company Secretaries LLP, having office at 101, Indus Chambers, Govt Arts College Road, Coimbatore-641 018. Copies of the same are posted on the official website of the Applicant Companies. Viz. www.malabargoldanddiamonds.com.

Persons entitled to attend and vote, may vote through electronic means or may attend and vote in person or by a proxy provided that all proxies in the prescribed form are deposited at the registered office of the respective registered office of the Applicant Companies at 16/501 M, Montana Estate, Paingottupuram, Peringolam (PO), Kozhikode, Kerala – 673571 not later than 48 hours before the respective meeting.

Forms of Proxy is available at the registered office of the company and are available on the website www.malabargoldanddiamonds.com.

The Applicant Companies has provided the facility of voting through remote e-voting and e- voting during the meeting so as to enable the Shareholders / Unsecured Creditors / Secured Creditors to consider and approve the Scheme. The Applicant Companies has engaged the services of Kfin Technologies Limited for facilitating the above said services.

The cut-off date for determining the eligibility of Shareholders / Unsecured Creditors / Secured Creditors for remote e- voting or e-voting during the meeting and attending the meeting will be seven days prior to the date of respective meetings.

The remote e voting shall commence at 9.00 A.M on 3 days prior to the date of meeting and shall end at 5.00 P.M on the date preceding to the date of meeting. E.g: if the date of meeting is 4th May 2026 the e voting shall commence at 9.00 A.M on 1st May 2026 and ends at 5.00 P.M on 3rd May 2026.The remote e-voting shall not be allowed beyond the said date and time.

The detailed instructions for voting, the login id and password for e-voting will be delivered by e-mail/speed post to eligible Shareholders / Unsecured Creditors / Secured Creditors to their registered email/ address in relation to the companies for which the Tribunal orders the holding of the meetings. Those who have not registered their email and mobile number may contact through an email at corporateaffairs@malabargroup.com.

In case of any queries or grievances, with regard to e-voting Shareholders / Unsecured Creditors / Secured Creditors may contact Mr. Mohammed Shanoor, Deputy Manager of KFin Technologies Limited, at einward.ris@kfintech.com and evoting@ kfintech.com or call KFin's toll free no. 1800 309 4001.

The Hon'ble Tribunal has appointed the aforesaid persons as Chairpersons / Scrutinisers and failing them Mr. Isaac Thomas, Mr. Vinay Mathew, and Mr. Terry V. James, as Alternative Chairpersons and CS Lakshmi Narasimman Sarumathy, CA Babu Abraham Kallivayalil and CA Rajendran PR as Alternative Scrutinizers of the aforesaid meetings. The above-mentioned Scheme, if approved by the said meeting, will be subject to the subsequent approval of the Hon'ble Tribunal.

Dated on this the 31st day of March 2026 at Kozhikode.

Chairpersons appointed by the Hon'ble Tribunal for the meetings

Vision risks linked to diabetes, weight-loss drugs, warn doctors

High-risk patients may need closer monitoring, including baseline and periodic retinal examinations

Afshan Yasmeen
BENGALURU

Medical experts have urged caution over potential eye-related risks associated with GLP-1 receptor agonists, a class of drugs increasingly used to treat obesity and type-2 diabetes.

Medications such as semaglutide (sold as Ozempic and Wegovy) and tirzepatide (Mounjaro) have gained global attention for their effectiveness in improving blood sugar control and aiding weight loss.

Their use in India is expected to rise following the expiry of semaglutide's key patent on March 20, potentially paving the way for more affordable versions. While this could expand access, doctors warned it may also lead to unsupervised or inappropriate use.

Ophthalmologists point to growing evidence that drugs for aiding weight loss, and improving blood sugar control may be linked to initial worsening of diabetic retinopathy. GETTY IMAGES

Emerging concerns

Ophthalmologists point to growing evidence that these drugs may be linked to an initial worsening of diabetic retinopathy and, in rare cases, non-arteritic ischemic optic neuropathy (NAION) - often described as an "eye stroke" that can cause sudden, painless vision loss.

Experts said rapid reductions in blood sugar levels triggered by these therapies may temporarily affect blood flow to the retina and optic nerve in some patients.

Risk factors

Although long-term data is still evolving, global agencies such as the World Health Organisation and the European Medicines Agency have recognised NAION as a rare potential adverse effect.

The risk appears higher among individuals with pre-existing diabetic retinopathy, hypertension, sleep apnoea, or certain optic nerve characteristics, though overall incidence remains low.

Careful use

Rohit Shetty, director of Narayana Nethralaya, said the benefits of these drugs must be balanced with careful clinical judgment. "These medications are effective when used appropriately, but their increasing use means we must be more vigilant in identifying patients at higher risk of complications," he said. He stressed the need for detailed pre-treatment evaluation. "Assessing both systemic and ocular health - particularly the presence of diabetic retinopathy or vascular risk factors - helps in stratifying patients and choosing the most appropriate therapy," he said.

He added that high-risk patients may need closer monitoring, including baseline and periodic retinal examinations.

Integrated care

G. V. Divakar, former president of the Bangalore Ophthalmic Society and consultant at Divakars Speciality Hospital, said GLP-1 receptor agonists have been linked to rare but serious ocular complications.

"These include non-arteritic anterior ischemic optic neuropathy, which can result in permanent vision loss, as well as progression of diabetic retinopathy," he said, emphasising the need for regular eye examinations and follow-up. "A collaborative approach between endocrinologists and ophthalmologists is key to minimising risks while ensuring patients benefit from these therapies. With wider access expected, patients should not self-medicate. Treatment should only be undertaken under proper medical supervision," he said.

Rajesh R., consultant - Vitreo-retina and Ocular Oncology at Sankara Eye Hospital, said while these drugs are effective, awareness of potential risks is crucial. "Rapid improvement in blood glucose levels can sometimes lead to a temporary worsening of diabetic retinopathy. This is not unique to these drugs and can occur with any form of intensive glucose control," he explained.

Patients with long-standing uncontrolled diabetes or advanced retinopathy are particularly vulnerable.

Some visual disturbances reported during treatment may be linked to fluctuations in blood sugar rather than a direct drug effect, he said.

Festive glow

Devotees gathered at the Dharmaraya Swamy temple at Thigalarapet, decorated for the Karaga festival, in Bengaluru on Wednesday. The illumination extended across J.C. Road, Avenue Road, Mysore Bank Circle, Hudson Circle, the Corporation Building, and Cottonpet. K. MURALI KUMAR (ANOTHER PHOTO ON PAGE 9)

KIA gets ACI's Level 5 customer experience accreditation

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) has achieved Level 5 accreditation under the Airports Council International (ACI) Customer Experience Accreditation programme, the highest level within the framework. The ACI Airport Customer Experience Accreditation Programme is the only global framework in the airport industry that offers a comprehensive, end-to-end assessment of customer experience management.

The Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) said KIA's achievement of Level 5 accreditation follows a rigorous review and validation process. "In line with this achievement, KIA has embedded customer experience as an organisational priority, anchored in strong governance, cross-functional coordination and a service-driven culture across the airport community," BIAL said.

HC slams RTO officials for illegal seizure of luxury cars

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Coming down heavily on the Transport Department officials for overstepping their legal authority in seizing two luxury cars, the High Court of Karnataka, in two separate verdicts, has ordered the initiation of a departmental inquiry against a Senior Motor Vehicle Inspector (SMVI) for illegally seizing cars while setting aside the action of seizure of the vehicles.

Justice M. Nagaprasanna quashed a First Information Report (FIR) registered against J. Ramakrishnaiah, proprietor of H1 Car Care, whose black Lamborghini Huracan was seized by SMVI Ranjith N., of Bengaluru South Regional Transport Office (RTO) on February 8. The officer had filed a complaint for evasion of road tax and registration of the car, allegedly using fabricated documents. The court found that SMVI had barged into the petitioner's premises without prior notice, personally towed the vehicle, and shifted it between police stations – all before issuing any demand notice. "The complainant-officer acted as accuser and executioner," the court observed, noting that Sections 8A and 11A of the Karnataka Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1957, require a demand notice and opportunity of hearing before any seizure for tax recovery.

Ordering the transport authorities to initiate an inquiry against officials of the Regional Transport Office (RTO) found manipulating registration records, the court also gave liberty to the RTO to take necessary action against the petitioner as per the law on tax evasion and other allegations.

In another judgement, Justice Jyoti M. quashed the seizure of a Mercedes-AMG G63 belonging to Neeraj Kumar Sharma of Mangaluru.

The vehicle was detained in Mysuru on June 15, 2025, by Ranjit, who was posted at Bengaluru South RTO but was deputed to a special squad to detect tax evasion by high-end vehicles and to submit a report to the Mysore West RTO. The reason for seizure was evasion of tax by registering the vehicle with different model name.

However, the court said Mr. Ranjit "acted beyond the scope of his authority as though he himself were the RTO of Mysore West," while declaring the seizure "without jurisdiction and therefore unsustainable in law."

The court also condemned the authorities for cancelling the vehicle's registration while the present petition was pending.

She ordered release of the car and restoration of its registration.

Karnataka seeks public feedback on draft policy for students' digital use

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka Health Department has opened its draft policy on responsible digital use among students for public feedback, inviting objections and suggestions until April 15. The draft policy was released last week.

Prepared in collaboration with the NIMHANS and other stakeholders, the draft policy is aimed at tackling growing concerns over excessive and unsafe use of digital devices among schoolchildren. Students, parents, and the general public can submit their responses via email to dd6mhkar@gmail.com and ddehospital-hfws@karnataka.gov.in.

Addressing pressperson on Wednesday, Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said, "The public is increasingly aware of the negative effects of mobile phones on health and education, including anxiety, cyberbullying, sleeplessness and social isolation. You may also notice that family members are speaking less with each other because of mobile phone use. It is disturbing our social structure." "While we have learnt how to use technology, we have not adequately understood its adverse effects, including digital addiction and its impact on the mind," the Minister said, emphasising that the policy stresses training parents and teachers to help reduce excessive mobile phone use among children.

The draft policy is aimed at tackling growing concerns over unsafe and excessive use of digital devices among schoolchildren. PTI

One in four

The draft highlights that nearly one in four adolescents shows signs of problematic internet use, linking excessive screen time to mental health concerns such as anxiety, sleep disturbances, poor academic performance, and social isolation, along with risks like cyberbullying and online exploitation.

The framework promotes digital well-being, emotional resilience, and responsible technology use.

Training of teachers

"Schools will be required to frame their own digital use guidelines, including setting limits on recreational screen time - recommended at no more than one hour a day - addressing cyber misconduct, and ensuring access to counselling support. Teachers will be trained to identify early signs of digital distress and guide students to appropriate services," the Minister said. The policy urges them to enforce screen-time rules, create device-free spaces at home, and model responsible digital behaviour, while schools are expected to strengthen engagement with families, he said.

Caregiver series launched in Kannada

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bangalore Hospice Trust, Karunashraya, on Wednesday, launched the Kannada edition of its caregiver education series on home-based palliative care, 'Moments That Matter'.

The 17-module animation-based series offers guidance on caregiving practices, including back care, bedsore prevention, bladder care and wound dressing. Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao launched the series that has been uploaded on YouTube. The Minister said over 52,000 terminally ill patients in Karnataka are being provided home-based palliative care under the National Programme for Palliative Care (NPPC). The government recently constituted a State-level Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for palliative care.

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, APR. 02	
RISE 06:15	SET 18:31
RISE 18:48	SET 06:09
FRIDAY, APR. 03	
RISE 06:15	SET 18:31
RISE 19:37	SET 06:46
SATURDAY, APR. 04	
RISE 06:14	SET 18:31
RISE 20:27	SET 07:25

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	20
Mysuru	34	21
Bengaluru	33	22

Bengaluru Today
33°C The weather will be day. Day will be warm. Night will be slight cool.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
34°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant. Dry weather to occur.

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THE HINDU
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Greenpeace India dubs city's stalled infra as 'stupid projects'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Commuters in the city likely experienced a sense of relief upon seeing banners and caricatures highlighting the halted infrastructure projects on Wednesday, April 1, April Fool's Day. The banners on the unfinished flyover linking Kenchanahalli Road to Mysore Road (R.R. Nagar), which has remained stalled for over three years since work began in 2022, posed questions such as, "Is this development?", "₹72 crore for this?", and "Is this the future of youth?"

Bengaluru Rising, a coalition of civil society organisations, alongside Greenpeace India, launched the 'Stupid Projects' campaign by placing caricatures that reflect citizens' frustration with the deteriorating infrastructure on the unfinished pillars of a long-abandoned flyover project at the Rajarajeshwari Nagar Arch on Mysuru Road. K. MURALI KUMAR

Talking point

Commuters stopped their vehicles to take pictures of the caricatures, which soon became a talking point on social media and revived debate over Bengaluru's stalled projects.

"These projects are widely discussed, and concerns are raised frequently. We don't know how many times the Kenchanahalli-Mysore link road has been brought up, yet there has been no progress at all, indicating that the problem goes beyond on-ground challenges," said Ananya R., a daily commuter on R.R. Nagar Main Road.

Campaign

The campaign 'Bengaluru Rising', spearheaded by Greenpeace India in collaboration with various civil society organisations, targeted 10 stalled projects throughout the city on April 1, known as April Fool's Day, to symbolically highlight how the authorities were "fooling citizens."

Greenpeace India labelled these unfinished projects as "stupid projects" and installed banners at these sites, featuring caricatures that reflect public sentiment about the stalled works. It held a series of workshops since October 2025, where it collected expressions of frustrated citizens over these stalled projects, terming them "screams".

The initiative aims to maintain public discourse on the state of the city's unfinished projects

These were turned into caricatures and banners, which were put up on these projects on Wednesday.

'Symbol of stupidity'

"'Stupid Projects' are those where massive delays disrupt people's lives, where costs have escalated outrageously, and where projects remain incomplete or fail to solve the very problems they were designed for. In the lead-up to the civic elections, we are calling on all candidates to engage with these concerns raised by citizens and not allow Bengaluru to be turned into a global symbol of stupidity," said Amruta S.N., climate and energy campaigner at Greenpeace India. During the winter session held in Belagavi, in response to a question by Rajajinagar MLA, S. Suresh Kumar, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said that 12 projects were ongoing, of which around three have been completed and the rest are still in progress.

The list includes the infamous Ejipura Flyover, the Rajarajeshwari Nagar Flyover, and the grade separator at Jalahalli Cross.

Interestingly, eight of these projects are in the Rajarajeshwari Nagar Assembly constituency, represented by Munirathna.

The recent budgets presented by the new Bengaluru corporations did not mention any of these stalled projects, exacerbating the issue. GBA sources told *The Hindu* that some of these projects being stalled due to political reasons, was an "open secret".

Census: GBA told not to rope in BLOs as enumerators

These officers are currently engaged in voter mapping for SIR

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

With the Census beginning on Wednesday, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has been instructed not to draw those who have been functioning as Booth Level Officers (BLOs) in the City, as enumerators for the Census. BLOs in the city are drawn from the Education Department and other areas such as electricity utilities and ASHA workers. These BLOs are currently engaged in voter mapping for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR).

While corporation officials maintain that adequate staff have been allotted to each of the five city corporations, officials on the ground pointed to overlapping responsibilities. Revenue officials, who are handling Census-related work, are also tasked with electoral roll revisions for the upcoming GBA elections and the SIR, in addition to overseeing ongoing exercises such as e-khata processing and tax collection.

Officials said this convergence of duties is likely to pose a challenge, mainly during the enumeration phase beginning April 16, when enumerators are required to undertake door-to-door visits.

A view of the Greater Bengaluru Authority building in Bengaluru. FILE PHOTO

On the first day of the exercise, April 1, officials said appointment notices have been issued to enumerators across corporations. The staff are expected to acknowledge and return these on April 2, after which the GBA will have clarity on the actual number of enumerators available on the ground, as against those allotted.

According to sources, the total requirement across the GBA stands at 3,405 supervisors and 20,308 enumerators. Allocation figures, however, show 3,651 supervisors and 21,480 enumerators – exceeding 105% of the requirements.

The West corporation has been allotted the highest number of supervisors, with over 1,000, along with more than 5,800 enumerators, while the East corporation has the lowest allocation, with just over 3,200 enumerators.

Challenges

One specific challenge officials flagged is the conflict between datasets and timelines across the three exercises.

The Census, SIR, and GBA election preparations all rely on household-level data, but follow different reference dates, formats, and verification protocols. This, a senior official said, means officials may be working with slightly different versions of the "same" household or individual at times. Another issue is the strain on field verifications of quality and accountability structures. Since the same supervisory chain is overseeing multiple exercises, officials said it becomes difficult to maintain independent checks for each process..

This could lead to inconsistencies not only in data but also in how rules are applied on the ground.

Another challenge they said is to cover Bengaluru's large floating population, particularly where, in many cases, households remain locked during visits, or occupants may be unavailable or frequently shifting, requiring repeated visits and coordination.

SIR mapping: Subhash Nagar residents fear deletion; coalition demands clarity in voter rolls

Shilpa Elizabeth
BENGALURU

Several individuals from lower-income groups residing in Subhash Nagar near Begur may face deletion during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), as BLOs have reportedly been unable to map many of them who moved into the area after the year 2002.

Members of the Domestic Workers' Rights Union, as a part of the 'My Vote, My Right' coalition, have written to V. Anbukumar, Chief Electoral Officer - Karnataka (CEO-K), for immediate intervention to assist in the mapping process.

Mapping current voters with the 2002 electoral rolls is part of the preparatory exercise ahead of the SIR scheduled to begin in the State this month. FILE PHOTO

Missing from voter roll

Mapping current voters with the 2002 electoral rolls is part of the preparatory exercise ahead of the SIR scheduled to begin in the State this month.

A large number of residents of Subhash Nagar, who are from the low-income group and earn a living as domestic workers, garment workers, construction workers and street vendors, live in rented accommodations and have shifted houses multiple times. Several of them moved into the area after 2002.

Citing the discussions that the Domestic Workers' Rights Union had with officials and community members in the area, the letter highlighted that BLOs have been unable to complete the mapping of such voters.

"The BLOs have also shared that out of all the voters in the 2002 voter roll, more than half the people have moved out. Therefore, a significant number of people, most probably in the hundreds, are those who have moved in after 2002, and remain unmapped," reads the letter.

Absence of documents

If a voter remains unmapped after the SIR begins, a notice will be issued to them, upon which they have to produce one of the 11 documents listed in the booklet on SIR issued by the CEO-K, as proof of citizenship.

The low literacy levels in the community also make it difficult for them to navigate the voter rolls on the website on their own.

'Conflicting numbers'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The 'My Vote, My Right' coalition members have demanded more transparency and clarity regarding voter rolls, in a letter to the CEO-K.

The letter pointed out that while the CEO-K, during a meeting in March with the coalition members, claimed that out of 5.57 crore voters, the mapping of 4.46 crore voters has been completed, a document shared by him during the meeting showed that only 19.13 lakh voters have been 'System and BLO verified'.

"As the mapping of electoral rolls is being done in a completely opaque manner, it remains unclear to us what the protocol is to deem that the mapping of a voter has been completed. If only 19.13 lakh voters have been 'System and BLO verified', how can it be claimed that the mapping of 4.46 crore voters has been completed?" the letter questioned.

The coalition members appealed to the CEO-K to formulate and make public the written instructions, guidelines and protocol for mapping, and publish it on the website.

"We also demand that the data you provided to us be made public on the website and be updated regularly," the letter urged.

Police rescue runaway at Egmore

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

A 16-year-old boy who had run away from his house in Bengaluru was rescued at the Egmore Railway station on Wednesday.

The city police said that a boy from Kottiya Palaya in Bengaluru had run away from his house last month. On Wednesday, he was seen loitering near the Egmore railway station, and two constable approached him and asked about his native place.

Based on the information, his parents were contacted, who informed that a missing complaint had been filed.

The constables immediately contacted the Egmore police station and kept the boy in safe custody to be handed over to the police officials from Bengaluru.

ChildLine operates a toll-free helpline for children in distress - 1098.

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The day when we honour and salute our brave policemen for their selfless service, courage, valour and dedication

POLICE FLAG DAY

2nd April, 2026

Tributes to the unwavering dedication to duty of our Police

Chief Guest
Shri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister

Presided By
Dr. G. Parameshwara
Hon'ble Home Minister

Date: 02.04.2026, Thursday, Time: 9:00 AM
Venue: K.S.R.P. Parade Ground, Koramangala, Bengaluru

Dr. G. Parameshwara
Hon'ble Home Minister participated in the programme of the department.

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POLICE FLAG DAY
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Buy a Police Flag and Contribute to the Police Welfare Fund
₹ 100, ₹ 500, ₹ 1000

"As enshrined in our Constitution, to safeguard public property and to abjure violence are the fundamental duties of every citizen of India."

karnataka information
Department of Information and Public Relations

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Tax collections are up from last year, but key revenue targets missed

In addition, the State government has estimated revenue loss of about ₹10,000 crore owing to GST rate rationalisation in 2025-2026, and is estimating a revenue loss of about ₹15,000 crore in 2026-27

MONEY MATTERS

Stamps and Registration

- Despite **13.31%** increase in revenue collection, target missed by **8.9%** amid delays related to **e-khata**
- **₹25,493.79 crore** was collected as against the target of **₹28,000 crore**

Transport

- Revenue target missed by **14%** over tax concessions provided to electric vehicles and certain other categories of vehicles; revenue increased by **8.4%**
- **₹12,829.64 crore** collected as against the target of **₹15,000 crore**

Excise

- Collection of revenue increased by **11.94%,** despite **11.34%** drop in beer sales and **0.74%** in IML sales
- Revised target of **₹43,000 crore** missed with a collection of **₹40,056.76 crore;** initial target was **₹40,000 crore**
- Prolonged rainfall, which brought down temperature, and floods in North Karnataka cited as reasons for dip in beer sales

GST

- Total of **₹1.58 lakh crore** collected as GST in the State, a growth of **11.6%**
- The SGST and the SGST portion of IGST settlement sees a **5% increase**
- Karnataka received **₹87,256 crore** during 2025-2026 as the SGST and the SGST portion of IGST as against **₹82,808 crore** in 2024-2025

11.94% rise in Excise revenue despite drop in beer sales

Sharath S. Srivatsa
BENGALURU

Karnataka reported 11.94% increase in Excise revenue collection despite a steep drop in the sale of beer, which has been attributed to a long spell of rain coupled with floods and a marginal dip in sale of Indian Made Liquor (IML).

Beer sales declined steeply by 11.34% and IML sales declined marginally by 0.74% during 2025-2026.

The total sale volume of beer and IML in 2025-2026 is less than what was sold in 2023-2024.

At the end of the financial year, ₹40,056.76 crores had been collected as Excise revenue as against ₹35,783 crore collected during 2024-2025. In 2023-2024, the Excise collection stood at ₹34,628.98 crore. The target for the Excise Department had been set at ₹40,000 crore initially, which had been revised to ₹43,000 crore, in anticipation of higher sales and also expected revenue from auctioning 569 defunct CL 2 and CL 7 licences.

As many as 399.29 lakh cases of beer was sold during 2025-2026 as against 450.36 lakh cases sold in 2024-2025. The sale of beer is less than that reported in 2023-2024 when 444.05 lakh cases were sold.

The sale of IML also dipped, but marginally by 0.74% over the previous year, and the total sale of IML is lower than what was sold in 2023-2024. While 703.62 lakh cases were sold in 2025-2026, 708.85 lakh cases were sold in 2024-2025.

In a year of challenge, GST collection in State grew by 11.6%

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a year where the GST rate rationalisation threw up a huge challenge for the State to mop up resources, Karnataka received ₹87,256 crore as part of the SGST, and the SGST portion of the IGST settlement during 2025-2026, about 5% more than 2024-2025 when the settlement was ₹82,808 crore.

Data shared by the Commercial Taxes Department shows that a total of ₹1.58 lakh crore was collected as GST in the State, a growth of 11.6% over the collection in 2024-2025. Collection in Karnataka is the second highest in the country after Maharashtra where the GST collection stood at ₹3.61 lakh crore during 2025-2026.

Of the total collection of ₹1.58 lakh crore, ₹40,621 crore was CGST, ₹50,245 crore was SGST, and ₹67,351 crore was IGST.

The State government had estimated the revenue loss at about ₹10,000 crore owing to GST rate rationalisation in 2025-2026, and is estimating a revenue loss of about ₹15,000 crore in 2026-27.

Transport Department misses target by 14% owing to concessions

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

Tax concessions for electric vehicle registrations and concessions extended to certain categories of vehicles, including State corporation buses and vehicles purchased under various subsidies, dragged down the revenue of the Transport Department as it missed the target by 14%.

The revenue in 2025-2026 stood at ₹12,829.64 crore as against the target ₹15,000 crore set for the department, about ₹2,100 crore less. The revenue, however, has increased by 8.4% over 2024-2025, when the department collected ₹11,744.67 crore.

This is the third consecutive year that the target has not been met. In 2024-25, the department collected ₹11,744.67 crore as against a target of ₹12,500 crore.

Similarly in 2023-24, collections stood at ₹11,106.67 crore, falling short of the ₹11,500 crore target. In contrast, 2022-23 was the only year when the department exceeded its target, collecting ₹9,487.23 crore as against ₹9,007 crore.

Officials indicated that factors such as tax concessions for certain categories of vehicles and variations in vehicle registrations have had an impact on revenue realisation.

"The targets set for recent years have been significantly higher. At the same time, tax concessions for electric vehicles and variations in vehicle registrations have affected overall revenue collections," an official source said.

Amid issues, Stamps and Registrations Dept. sees revenue increase

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Amid problems in the registration of properties over e-khata, revenue collection from registrations increased by 13.31% even as the Department of Stamps and Registration failed to meet the target for the financial year. The number of document registration also came down by 2.16% in the period.

While a target of ₹28,000 crore had been set for 2025-2026, the department was able to collect ₹25,493.79 crore, missing the target by ₹2,506 crore or about 8.9%. The number of documents registered stood at 22.88 lakh, about 50,500 documents less than what were registered in 2024-2025.

The department had missed the target in 2024-2025 too when it mopped up ₹22,498 crore as against the target of ₹26,000 crore.

While the slowdown in revenue collection had been blamed on delays associated with e-khata, the sector had also seen a slowdown.

Now picking up

Government officials said that they were seeing registrations picking up and many delays could fructify during the current financial year. Since November, registrations and revenue collection that had been affected had picked up, sources said.

BEL registers turnover of ₹26,750 crore in FY 2025-26, growth of 16.2%

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) has achieved a turnover of around ₹26,750 crore (provisional and unaudited), during the Financial Year 2025-26, against the previous year's turnover of ₹23,024 crore, registering a growth of 16.2%.

This includes export sales of around $141.9 million during FY 2025-26, as against the previous year's export turnover of $106.17 million, registering a growth of 33.65%.

During the fiscal year 2025-26, BEL secured orders worth ₹30,000 crore, including export orders worth $346 million.

Some of the major orders received during the year in defence were Avionics for LCA, Mountain Radars, EW suite for helicopters, Air Defence Radars, EOIR Payloads for Airborne and Naval platforms, EW systems for naval platforms, Fire Control and Sighting System for tanks, Mobile Communication Terminal, Network systems, Counter Unmanned Aerial System, Upgrades, Spares and Services.

The major orders in the non-defence sector include communication equipment, IT Infra for AIIMS, Airport Surveillance Radar, software solutions, Automatic Train Supervision System, and EVM.

On the export front, the major orders received include communication equipment, satellite communication network, TR modules, electronic fuzes, and drones.

Manoj Jain, chairman and managing director of BEL, said that the geopolitical incidents during the year and ongoing conflict in West Asia has highlighted the need for self-reliance in strategic sectors, and the importance of a resilient domestic industrial defence ecosystem.

HC directs govt. to allow FIR, probe graft charges against IAS officer Rohini Sindhuri

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In an unprecedented verdict, the High Court of Karnataka has directed the State government to grant sanction under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act to enable an investigation against IAS officer Rohini Sindhuri and others by registering a first information report (FIR) on a complaint alleging corruption in the procurement of eco-friendly cloth bags at exorbitant prices while she was serving as Deputy Commissioner, Mysuru, in 2021.

Justice M. Nagaprasanna passed the order while allowing a petition filed by Mysuru-based advocate and social activist Ravichandre Gowda N.R.

The petitioner had questioned State government's second Government Order, dated May 26, 2025, rejecting the request made by the erstwhile Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), now Lokayukta police, seeking permission under Section 17A of the PC Act from the competent authority for conducting a probe on the allegations against Ms. Sindhuri and the then managing director of Karnataka Handloom Development Corporation (KHDC), which had supplied the bags.

The case dates back to March, 2021, when a meeting chaired by Ms. Sindhuri as Deputy Commissioner decided to ban plastic bags in Mysuru district and procure eco-friendly cloth bags.

The petitioner, in his complaint to the then ACB, had alleged that identical bags were available in the retail market at just ₹13 per bag, claiming the State exchequer suffered a loss of approximately ₹5.88 crore. He further alleged that funds earmarked for development schemes in gram panchayats were diverted towards the procurement of these bags.

The erstwhile ACB had initially requested the government to accord permission for a probe under Section 17A in 2021. As the government, on September 19, 2022, refused permission, the petitioner had filed a petition in the High Court, which, in February 2025, quashed the government's decision of refusing permission, directing the government to pass an order afresh.

Following this, the government had passed the present order on May 26, 2025, again refusing permission for conducting a probe by registering an FIR by citing the exoneration of Ms. Sindhuri in a departmental inquiry conducted through a retired district judge.

However, Justice Nagaprasanna said that "the exoneration in a departmental proceeding cannot, in law, operate as a protective shield insulating the officer from even the threshold scrutiny of criminal investigation."

"The complaint registered was neither vague nor speculative," the court observed. "It did set out, with clarity and documentary support, allegation that prima facie discloses abuse of the office and consequential financial loss to the State."

In this case, the court said, what emerges is "a set of allegations that warrant, at the very least, a thorough and impartial investigation".

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

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IN FOND MEMORY OF
Late D. ANNALAKSHMI AMMAL
(Wife of Late V.S.K.D. NADAR)

THIRTY SECOND ANNIVERSARY
02.04.2026
Ever Loving
D.ANANDA RAJAN'S
Family Members
D.MANOHARA RAJAN'S
Family Members
D.GUNASEELA RAJAN
& Family Members

REMEMBRANCE

IN FOND REMEMBRANCE

Dr.P.N. PARAMESWARAN
24th ANNIVERSARY DAY
29.10.1950 02.04.2002
A True Visionary and a Pioneer in Education Dedicated His life for the Service of the People
Fondly Remembered by
FAMILY MEMBERS & STAFF OF
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IN THE COURT OF THE SENIOR CIVIL JUDGE, AT HOSKOTE
O. S No. 2602 of 2022

BETWEEN: MR. ARUN KUMAR, son of Mr. S. Bhoja Raju, Aged about 48 years, residing at No. 8, 2nd Main Road, RMV II Stage, 3rd Block, Bangalore - 560 094
...Plaintiff

AND : SMT. NEELAMMA and Ors.
...Defendants

PUBLIC NOTICE
SUMMONS TO PROPOSED DEFENDANTS Nos. 7 and 8
BY WAY OF PAPER PUBLICATION:

1. **RIDHI VENTURES**, Having its Office at No.7/3, Narayani Arcade, ITPL Main Road, Above Bata Show Room, Bangalore - 560 037. represented by its Proprietor Mr. N Chalapathi
2. **Mr. KHUSHAL DILIP BAJAJ**, Son of Mr. Dilip Mangilal Bajaj, Residing at No.7/3, Narayani Arcade, ITPL Main Road, Above Bata Show Room, Bangalore - 560 037.

Whereas, the above-named Plaintiff has instituted the above suit and has also filed an Interlocutory Application under Order I Rule 10 of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 seeking to implead you as Proposed Defendant Nos. 7 and 8 in the above suit.

Take notice that you are hereby summoned to appear before this Hon'ble Court in person or by a pleader on **02.05.2026 at 11 a.m** in person or through advocate / pleader to answer the questions to the same. Failing which the suit will be heard and determined as ex-parte.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that Agricultural Land available within the boundaries four boundaries and measuring 02 Acres 00 Guntas (Out of 02 Acres 14 guntas) in Sy. No. 89, Doddagatiganabi Village, Kasaba Hobli, Hosakote Taluk, Bangalore Rural District and bounded by :

East : Property of Smt. Janaki, Smt. Nagaveni and Smt. Chinmay Gowda,
West : Malur- Hosakote Road and property of Sri.Sunanda Ramesh and Smt. Bhagyamma,
North : Property measuring 14 guntas in Sy. No. 89 retained by vendor,
South : Property belonging to Sri. Narayanappa.

Given under my hand and the seal of the court on this the day of 01.04.2026 at Hosakote.

Advocate for Plaintiff : LEX ASTRA PARTNERS & ASSOCIATES
Office at : High Point 3, Flat No. 3111, 11th Floor, 45 Palace Road, Bangalore – 560001.
Phone No. 9845329685.
Email: ramesh.t.rt@gmail.com

FCRA Bill triggers political storm in Kerala

With Assembly polls round the corner, BJP goes into firefighting mode; party's Kerala president says Centre will factor in Church's reservations before tabling the proposed law in Parliament; Chief Minister terms BJP a political 'shapeshifting apparition', while Congress's Venugopal flags 'conspiracy'

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Catholic Church's strident opposition to the Centre's bid to table the contentious Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act Amendment Bill, 2026 (FCRA) in Parliament on Wednesday has roiled Kerala politics in the run-up to the Assembly election and put the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the State on the defensive.

The BJP, which has zealously sought to make inroads into the Christian community, a significant electoral bloc in Kerala, went into firefighting mode. The party's Kerala president, Rajiv Chandrasekhar, told a hastily convened press conference in Thiruvananthapuram that the Union government would factor in the Church's reservations about the Bill before tabling the proposed law in Parliament.

The Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council (KCBC) demand that the Union government refer the contentious Bill to the Parliamentary Subject Committee on Home Affairs also appeared to have caused the BJP to backpedal.

The apex Church body has also petitioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi not to pass the controversial Bill without detailed discussions in the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament and in the public domain.

The KCBC deputy secretary general, Father Thomas Tharayil, termed the amendment to the original law unconstitutional, superfluous, and draconian.

> The Bill is an offshoot of the RSS's revisionist Hindu majoritarian nationalism, which seeks to relegate minorities to subaltern citizens with diminished rights
>
> **PINARAYI VIJAYAN,** Kerala CM

> There is a hidden agenda behind the Government's attempt to introduce the Bill in Parliament, at a time when all Opposition parties are busy with the Assembly election
>
> **K.C. VENUGOPAL,** Congress leader

He said the Bill sought to grant the bureaucracy untrammelled authority to take over and administer charitable institutions, citing the slightest contravention of the law as a pretext.

Father Tharayil noted that the Centre was not renewing the FCRA accounts of voluntary and charitable organisations, including those run by the Catholic Church.

Muslim organisations

Various Muslim social and educational organisations in Kerala have shared the same concern and protested against the cancellation of their FCRA licences, raising the spectre of the shutdown of hospitals, schools, and orphanages that cater to society. Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) leader E.T. Muhammad Basheer, MP, termed the Bill patently anti-minority and unwarranted.

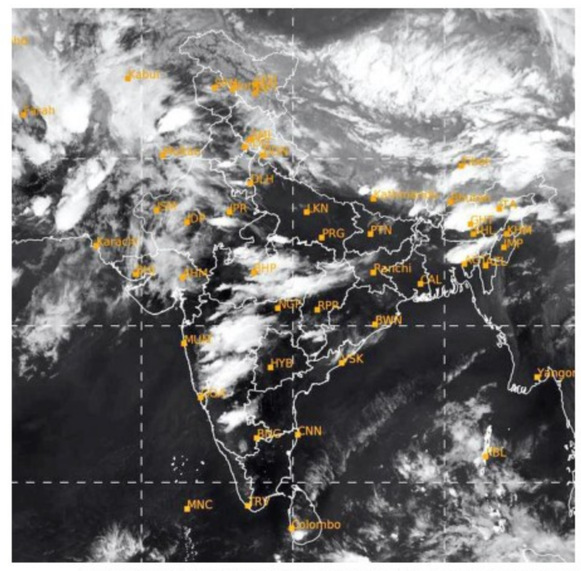
Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan noted that a Union Minister of State from Kerala, who is contesting the Assembly election (George Kurien), had "obsequiously" defended the Sangh Parivar-inspired Bill that seeks to strike at the root of Christian and Muslim charitable institutions, which provide affordable medical care and education to common folk, cutting across caste and communal lines in the State. He termed the BJP a political "shapeshifting apparition", whose "cake and flower diplomacy" towards Church leaders smacked of duplicity.

AICC general secretary K.C. Venugopal flagged a conspiracy in the BJP's bid to muscle the Bill through Parliament without discussion at a time when most Opposition members were occupied with elections in their respective States.

LOK SABHA PAUSES BILL
» PAGE 12

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning/ gusty winds likely at isolated places over Gujarat, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Odisha, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Konkan & Goa, Karnataka and Kerala

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	17	33.2	20.6	Kozhikode	—	34.5	27.1
Ahmedabad	—	37.0	25.0	Kurnool	—	39.5	26.8
Aizawl	1	32.7	16.1	Lucknow	15	36.3	19.7
Allahabad	2.8	37.0	21.0	Madurai	—	38.0	24.5
Bengaluru	—	33.8	21.2	Mangaluru	2	34.1	23.4
Bhopal	—	37.4	23.0	Mumbai	—	31.7	25.6
Bhubaneswar	—	37.5	23.0	Mysuru	—	34.2	21.2
Chandigarh	—	32.8	15.8	New Delhi	9	33.5	16.8
Chennai	—	35.5	25.2	Patna	—	33.9	24.4
Coimbatore	—	36.0	23.6	Port Blair	13	32.1	25.3
Dehradun	—	31.9	17.5	Puducherry	—	32.8	24.8
Gangtok	1	20.4	12.9	Pune	—	39.7	23.7
Goa	—	34.6	25.6	Raipur	—	39.2	23.4
Guwahati	20	29.4	20.0	Ranchi	—	34.1	21.4
Hubballi	—	36.0	22.0	Shillong	1	23.0	13.5
Hyderabad	—	36.2	25.0	Shimla	—	23.6	12.4
Imphal	—	28.7	18.9	Srinagar	—	20.8	7.5
Jaipur	—	33.6	21.7	Thiruvananthapuram	—	34.9	24.7
Kochi	—	32.6	26.2	Tiruchi	—	36.4	24.6
Kohima	20	18.0	13.9	Vijayawada	—	35.8	25.2
Kolkata	—	36.4	25.5	Visakhapatnam	—	33.2	26.7

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.61	..91	73	 41	...102	.....
Bengaluru	.16	..15	20	 95	...120	.....
Chennai	...4	5	33	 62	51	.....
Delhi	.15	101	53	... 136	...144	.....
Hyderabad	.12	..14	23	... 111	74	.....
Kolkata	...7	..53	26	 77	77	.....
Lucknow	.11	..25	43	 40	...105	.....
Mumbai	...4	..31	10	 68	91	.....
Pune	..—	..90	97	 64	94	.....
Visakhapatnam	.19	..41	17	 40	91	.....

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Angul, Odisha recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 303 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Madikeri, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 16

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Bill to establish Amaravati as sole capital of A.P. gets Lok Sabha nod

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed a Bill to recognise Amaravati as the sole and permanent capital of Andhra Pradesh, with the principal Opposition party Congress extending support to the legislation. The YSR Congress Party - which had earlier proposed a three-capital plan for the State - walked out in protest.

The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026, was passed by a voice vote after a nearly two-hour debate. It will now be sent to the Rajya Sabha, and then to the President for assent.

Once enacted, it will give statutory backing to Amaravati as the State's capital with effect from June 2, 2024, effectively foreclosing any future attempt to alter the decision.

Initiating the discussion, Congress member Manickam Tagore said his party supported the Bill but reiterated the demand for special category status for the State.

Supporting the legislation, BJP member C.M. Ramesh said it was perhaps the first instance of Parliament enacting a law to formally declare a specific location as a State capital.

The YSRCP, however, opposed the measure, arguing that the interests of farmers who had parted with land for the project remained unaddressed.

Centre did not keep assurances given to Telangana: Cong. MPs

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

The Congress MPs from Telangana made a strong pitch for the fulfilment of promises made to the State when it was formed in 2014.

Participating in a debate on the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026, in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday, the MPs asked why the BJP-led Union Government had not implemented the assurances given to Telangana, though 12 years had passed after it was carved out of Andhra Pradesh. Stating that several of the assurances remained on paper till date, they demanded that the Centre fulfil them, including the setting up of educational institutions such as NIT, IIM, IISER and a Central university.

Khammam MP R. Raghuram Reddy requested the Centre to take steps to expand the IT corridor in Telangana. The Centre should keep its promise of financial assistance to backward districts such as Khammam and Mahabubnagar under Section 94 (2) of the Reorganisation Act by implementing a special package.

Peddapalli MP Gaddam Vamshi Krishna said A.P. had several airports while Telangana had limited facilities. Despite repeated requests, there was no progress in establishing an airport in Peddapalli region, he said.

INBRIEF

Drones help thwart bid to distribute cash to voters

Teams involved in the enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) for the April 9 Assembly election in Puducherry used drone surveillance to apprehend five persons and seized ₹66,000 cash from them, which was meant to be distributed to voters.

Flying squad members deployed at the Mannadipet constituency apprehended three persons – Thirumaran, Silambarasan, and Chakravarthy – and seized ₹55,000 from them. Another team deployed at Mangalam constituency took into custody P. Rajendran and P. Suresh and seized from them around ₹11,000. The accused and the seized amount were handed over to the police for further processing, Chief Electoral Officer P. Jawahar said. He said the department was using drones for real-time monitoring of campaigns by political parties and candidates in all 30 Assembly segments.

Filmmaker Ranjith taken into custody in sexual assault case

Malayalam filmmaker and actor Ranjith, who was arrested in a sexual harassment case, was remanded to judicial custody for 14 days on Wednesday.

A Judicial First Class Magistrate remanded him, a day after he was taken into custody on Tuesday following a complaint from a female actor. He has been charged with attempt to outrage the modesty of a woman under relevant Sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. A special investigation team has been constituted to probe the case.

Deputy Commissioner of Police, Kochi City, Aswathy Jiji will supervise the investigation.

Eight arrested for running fake trading call centre

The Telangana police arrested eight men for operating a fraudulent call centre that cheated an investor of ₹36.30 lakh through a fake online trading scheme. The accused, all in their 20s, belong to West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. The complainant said he was added to a WhatsApp trading group and duped of the money. The police arrested the accused from a village in A.P. and seized 45 mobile phones, one laptop, three routers, two tablets, 22 cheque books, 40 ATM cards, 20 SIM cards, five Aadhaar cards, along with PAN and voter identity cards.

Flames of faith

Devotees burning camphor outside the Dharmarayaswamy Temple in Bengaluru on Wednesday, as part of a ritual during the annual Karaga festival. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Express train between Bengaluru and Vijayapura sought

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

With the completion of the 9.6-km double line railway work between Almatti and Wandal, which has been opened for traffic since March 25, Karnataka's Infrastructure Development Minister M.B. Patil has sought the introduction of a long-pending express train service between Bengaluru and Vijayapura.

This would reduce the travel time between these cities to about 10 hours from the present 15.

Mr. Patil has written in this regard on March 30 to Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and Minister of State for Railways V. Somanna.

In the letter, he pointed out that the Almatti-Wandal section, part of the Gadag-Hotgi double line project, has now been completed.

During an earlier meeting, it was mentioned that once this work would get finished, an express train between Bengaluru and Vijayapura could be introduced.

He has now requested that this should be given priority.

He also requested that trains from Bengaluru to Vijayapura be given limited stops upto Hubballi, and that they be routed via the Hubballi and Gadag bypass line to reduce travel time.

Kerala may see 20% drop in remittances amid West Asia war

Dhinesh Kallungal
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The West Asia crisis is expected to have a significant impact on Kerala's economy.

The State receives annual remittances of around ₹2.16 lakh crore from expatriates. Although the depreciation of the currency against the dollar is expected to cushion short-term impact, the State is expected to see at least a 20% decline in remittances this year, especially if the war continues.

The latest Kerala Migration Survey, conducted by the Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation with technical support from the International Institute of Migration and Development, has put the total remittances from expatriates at a record ₹2,16,893 crore in 2023, up from ₹85,092 crore in 2018.

"If the situation in West Asia persists, the immediate drop in remittances would be around 20%. This could increase further if the war escalates and continues for an extended period," said S. Irudaya Rajan, Chair of the IIMAD.

Around 80% of Kerala's expatriate population resides in Gulf Cooperation Council countries, contributing the lion's share of inward remittances.

Clarify stance on CAA, Stalin tells EPS

S. Ganesan
TIRUCHI

DMK president and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Wednesday dared AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami to clarify his current stance on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA).

Accusing the former Chief Minister of betraying the minorities and Sri Lankan Tamils by supporting the Act brought in by the BJP to save his position, Mr. Stalin alleged that the legislation was passed with the support of the AIADMK and PMK leader Anbumani Ramadoss in the Rajya Sabha. "In the protests that followed, thousands of people were attacked and about 70 people were killed. Their blood is on the hands of the AIADMK," Mr. Stalin charged, while campaigning in Tiruchi.

Show of strength: Chief Minister and DMK president M.K. Stalin with the alliance's candidates during an election campaign meeting in Tiruchi. R. VENGADESH

Yet, Mr. Palaniswami maintained that no one will be affected by the CAA and asked "which Muslim has been affected by the law." "But when he went alone in the 2024 [Lok Sabha] election, he took a U-turn by condemning the Act, just to attract minority votes. He described the Act as a historic blunder then, and said the BJP was creating divisions among the people. I ask him now – do you support the Act or not? Answer my query if you are brave enough," Mr. Stalin dared the AIADMK leader. He further accused Mr. Palaniswami of blindly supporting the three farm laws too, and insulting the farmers who protested against the laws by terming them "brokers."

Listing the various projects and schemes implemented over the past five years, Mr. Stalin said his government also ensured there were no caste or communal clashes in Tamil Nadu. "There is no mob violence as in Uttar Pradesh nor continuous violence as in Manipur. We have defeated the BJP's conspiracies to trigger such incidents here. A peaceful atmosphere and talented human resources have resulted in the flow of investments to Tamil Nadu under our rule. We have to take this development to the next level," he said, seeking the support of the electorate for the Secular Progressive Alliance (SPA) candidates in Tiruchi district.

Opportunity corridor

Inclusive development must be the focus in areas freed of Naxalism

India is now Naxal-free, Home Minister Amit Shah declared in the Lok Sabha on March 30, a day ahead of a deadline he had set for himself for ending Left Wing Extremism (LWE). His assertion follows three years of intensive paramilitary operations, during which 4,839 Maoists surrendered, 2,218 were arrested, and 706 were neutralised in encounters. Mr. Shah had made tackling LWE a central piece of his internal security policy, and of his political legacy. Not surprisingly, he made it a point to contrast the measures and milestones under his watch with those of the UPA regime on this front. Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had flagged LWE as the biggest internal security challenge before the country and his government launched Operation Green Hunt in 2009-10, an expansive paramilitary offensive that faced stiff criticism from his allies. The belt of Maoist influence, at its peak, touched over 180 districts covering tribal, forest, and mineral-rich areas in Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. The approach to tackling LWE then was more hesitant and measured, mindful of the human and institutional costs.

Mr. Shah launched an uncompromising militarist strategy which he reiterated in his speech. He said the government had a dual approach – dialogue and rehabilitation for those who surrendered arms, and no mercy for those who refused. His sweeping strategy steamrolled human rights activists and academics who were branded 'urban Naxals'. Police measures went far beyond even the harsh provisions of India's anti-terrorism laws, strangling freedoms and distorting judicial processes. The paramilitary operations have, in all probability, decapitated the military capabilities of the insurgents, opening the possibility of state presence in some of the least governed regions of the country. Mr. Shah said that a campaign to establish a school in every village and provide Aadhaar and ration cards to residents in some of the worst-affected areas has already begun. He is right that Maoists are ideologically opposed to parliamentary democracy, which is a position delinked from development or its absence. Nevertheless, inclusive development is imperative for a stable, peaceful society. The defeat of LWE extremism should not accelerate crony capitalist extraction of natural resources and further alienate tribal rights. Instead, it must lead to the genuine expansion of the rights of tribals, their substantive participation in parliamentary democracy, and accountability in resource extraction. Mr. Shah deserves credit for leading the operational success in curtailing LWE. He must now lead a politics of reconciliation and heal the wounds of the battle.

Orderly exit

While cutting down on oil, India must avoid new forms of dependence

Global energy shocks are not new. The world has seen them before – in the early 1970s after the Yom Kippur War; in 1979 following the Iranian Revolution; in 1990-91 after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and in 2022 after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Yet, the present crisis triggered by American-Israeli strikes on Iran is materially different. While Russia's war with Ukraine sharpened the geopolitical use of natural gas, the current conflict has simultaneously disrupted oil and gas flows. This disruption comes at a moment of profound transition in the global energy system. The International Energy Agency has underlined that transport electrification is firmly underway, with electric vehicles displacing about 0.9 million barrels per day (mb/d) of oil demand in 2023, rising over 30% to about 1.3 mb/d in 2024. This still amounts to barely 1%-1.3% of global oil demand, but it signals a structural shift. A supply shock of roughly 8 mb/d could accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels.

The energy transition could also unsettle the dollar's long-standing dominance in global energy trade. The "petrodollar" system, forged in the aftermath of the 1970s oil shocks through U.S.-Gulf strategic alignment, ensured that oil was priced in dollars and that surplus revenues were recycled into U.S. financial markets. This underpinned both the financialisation of oil and America's capacity to sustain large fiscal deficits. The emerging paradigm is more fragmented, with energy shifting from a globally traded commodity to geographically dispersed supply chains centred on critical minerals. Lithium reserves are concentrated in Chile (30%), Argentina (13%) and Australia (20%+). The Democratic Republic of Congo accounts for over 70% of global cobalt production, while Indonesia dominates the nickel market. Copper, crucial for electrification, is likewise concentrated in Chile and Peru. Canada is emerging as a key supplier of nickel, cobalt, and lithium, while Australia leads lithium production for western supply chains. Yet, the decisive advantage lies in processing and manufacturing, where China is dominant. This raises the possibility that a future energy system could be as dependent on Chinese industrial capacity – and potentially the yuan – as the old system was on dollar-denominated oil. For countries such as India, this presents a dilemma. The transition offers an opportunity to reduce fossil fuel dependence, but also risks creating new technological and supply chain dependencies. Navigating this landscape will require a conscious strategy rooted in the Global South's legacy of non-alignment – securing resources, building domestic technological capabilities in manufacturing and processing, and avoiding a new form of dependence that merely shifts old hierarchies.

A textbook, criticism, the Court and contempt

Sriram Panchu

Senior advocate and mediator

It is prime news ever since the Supreme Court reacted to the treatment of the judiciary in the Class eight textbook brought out by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). The Court has shelved the book and the authors, and a new committee of legal eminences is to decide what our children should read.

Contempt and the handling of criticism

What is this power of contempt? It consists of two types. The first is civil contempt, invoked for disobedience of a court order. That is clear. The second is criminal contempt, and that is for obstructing the administration of justice, or prejudicing judicial proceedings. And, importantly, scandalising or lowering the authority of the court by hostile criticism that shakes public confidence in the judiciary. This is a little more complicated, requiring lines to be drawn.

Criminal contempt is not to be invoked because an individual judge's sense of pride or ego is offended. It is invoked because a false image of the court is spread which can be deleterious and prejudicial. Why should this be actionable? Because the court and public opinion are connected by multiple twists of the democratic thread.

Judges do not have the power of the purse, or the sword. They have their power under the Constitution and the law. But the real substratum of their power, the hard rock, is the faith the public vests in the courts. Every government knows that, and that is the reason they do not mess with the courts. That goodwill and trust are garnered over countless judicial actions upholding the law, delivering justice and being the bulwark for the protection of precious rights. It is that public goodwill and trust which constitute the real power of the court, the unspoken major premise in the balance of power doctrine. That favourable opinion and support are threatened by motivated reports denigrating the judiciary, especially when repeatedly and widely spread.

Over the years, great judges have made one thing clear – that they are not immune from criticism. Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sabyasachi Mukherjee spoke about the inability of the courts to deliver quick and substantial justice and said that this criticism should turn the search light inward.

Here is CJI P.B. Gajendragadkar: "We ought never to forget that the power to punish for contempt, large as it is, must always be exercised cautiously, wisely and with circumspection. Frequent or indiscriminate use of this power in anger or irritation would not help to sustain the dignity and status of the court but may sometimes affect it adversely. Wise Judges never forget that the best way to sustain the dignity and status of their office is to deserve respect from the public at large by the quality of their judgments, the fearlessness, fairness and objectivity of their approach, and by the restraint, dignity and decorum which they observe in their judicial conduct."

The NCERT textbook controversy should be resolved without diminishing judicial respect or free speech

There is also the broad shoulder approach. CJI S.P. Bharucha, while disapproving of the statements of Medha Patkar and Arundhati Roy, explained that he was dropping action against them because "the Court's shoulders are broad enough to shrug off their comments". This seems rather apposite now. Justice Bharucha was one of the earliest to come out loud about corruption in the judiciary; he even offered a percentage estimate. Several other judicial leaders have since voiced concerns. It is nowhere near the malaise that affects the other branches; but even one corrupt judge is an aberration and is not to be tolerated. And, unfortunately, it is the one bad apple that makes news and taints the rest.

And from abroad the ringing voice of the great Lord Denning: "Let me say at once that we will never use this jurisdiction as a means to uphold our own dignity. That must rest on surer foundations. Nor will we use it to suppress those who speak against us. We do not fear criticism, nor do we resent it. For there is something far more important at stake. It is no less than freedom of speech itself. It is the right of every man, in Parliament or out of it, in the press or over the broadcast, to make fair comment, even outspoken comment, on matters of public interest... We must rely on our conduct itself to be its own vindication."

Here is another example, humorous yet telling. After the Spycatcher judgement in 1987, the *Daily Mail* called the judges "Old Fools". Contempt action did not follow. Lord Templeman said he could not deny that he was old, and being a fool was a matter of opinion – obviously, he could not be bothered about the Mail's.

Where the line is drawn

But the Court draws a line. The criticism must be founded on facts set forth correctly. It must not be reckless. It must not be ill-motivated to denigrate the institution. Because, as said above, bringing down its image lessens its capacity to deliver justice to people and institutions at large. And lessens a crucial power it holds in our country, the power of judicial review over acts of legislature and executive. This is the birthing ground for millions of cases seeking relief against administrative wrongdoing and legislative excess. Politicians and bureaucrats rail against the court invoking this power, but it is this which ensures accountability, transparency and good governance. The other branches do not value these, the judiciary does. And it can hold and exercise this power because people welcome judicial relief, and place the judiciary in high esteem. The cord that binds the court and the common man sustains both in a commonality of purpose and benefit. We must, therefore, not be at ease when that connective tissue comes under threat. When it is a piece of writing that comes under the lens of contempt of court, wise judges tread cautiously. After all, they are the protectors of free speech when policemen and other harassers pick on citizens. And academic freedom, not chilling silence, is what judges would seek to protect.

Perhaps we could have avoided this scenario if the writers, who were senior academicians, had been put on notice and given an opportunity to explain their comments or conclusions. Who knows? A suitable rectification or clarification could have been undertaken. A cautionary admonition may have sufficed. The judges may have come around to amend their initial assessment of the impact on the institution and simply dropped the proceedings. It may have passed off as a storm in a teacup, or the broad shoulders would have simply shrugged. Due process works in wondrous ways. One hopes that the matter will end soon, and satisfactorily, with respect for the Court being dimmed not a whit, and free speech and fair comment not seen as adversarial to the Court. As wisely observed, when the Court onboards criticism, it affirms the system that we are all under the rule of law.

Once we cross this bridge, there is much to do. Students must be duly apprised of the role of the judiciary, not just in resolving disputes between individuals and entities, but also in its stellar role as the protector and enforcer of the Constitution. The importance of fundamental rights including the right to equality, free speech, practice of religion, and the judiciary's role in their preservation and enhancement must be set forth. As also the challenges which it faces, of infrastructure, manpower and corruption.

The end note

One parts with a concern. The judiciary is struggling to develop adequate instruments to tackle this menace within. Impeachment is lengthy; politics plays its part there. Transfer is resorted to, but may just be a location change. In-house inquiry procedures show that action is taken, but may be futile if there is resistance from the offender. Our original constitutional scheme did not envisage encountering judicial corruption beyond the odd instance, and we now have to fashion deterrents and remedies for wider application. This will be of great benefit to hardworking and honest judges, who constitute the vast majority, as well as to the system of administration of justice. Textbook improvement will follow.

A West Asia security rethink amid America's role

Kabir Taneja

Executive Director of the Observer Research Foundation Middle East

As the United States and Israel-led war against Iran enters its second month – with conflicting viewpoints from Washington DC. and Tel Aviv on what the aims of this conflict are and under what conditions they intend to seize their respective military operations – regional countries in West Asia are re-thinking their security future. The closure of the Strait of Hormuz along with Iran's 'scorched earth' policy of striking any targets across the Persian Gulf even remotely attached to American interests is leading to demands for a strategic reset.

U.S. President Donald Trump's view that he and his team were surprised that Gulf states were targeted by Tehran as a response to the U.S.-Israel military strikes has surprised many. For a long time, Iran has said that if it was targeted and the regime's collapse made a state aim, the conflict would become regional. However, regional security has always been a minefield as far as interests are concerned; some tough questions and issues will have to be navigated, the trailers of which are visible today.

Pakistan's attempts to claw its way back in

Pakistan's attempt to insert itself as a mediator between Iran and the U.S. has, as expected, ruffled feathers in India. For Islamabad – or more accurately Rawalpindi, given self-anointed Field Marshal Asim Munir's central role in the country's political direction – the access it has built with Mr. Trump over the past year provides it an opportunity to further strengthen this relationship. However, more importantly, this is also an opportunity for Pakistan to reorient itself toward West Asia's Islamic identity, as it was often on the peripheries of this identity due to its long-standing economic troubles.

The Iran conflict has provided Pakistan's leaders the rare opportunity to break through some of these shackles; its position as the only Muslim-majority country with a nuclear weapon, is one in demand as of today. The fact that Pakistan hosted the Foreign Ministers of Türkiye, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, last week, as a consortium, and attempted to leverage its access to Tehran as a neighbouring state highlights its exploration of new security arrangements that are more rooted in regional and Islamic cooperation.

The urgency for a new regional security architecture grows amid the West Asian crisis

Stirrings within the Gulf

Countries such as Kuwait, which has also been on the receiving end of Iranian aggression, have gone ahead and even criticised constructs such as the Arab League. Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah in an address to other Arab Foreign Ministers, has said that the League has struggled to address the fast-moving challenges being faced.

The leaders of Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Qatar have also met to commit to deepened security cooperation. Until a few years ago, Saudi Arabia and Qatar were fundamentally at odds, with Riyadh imposing an economic blockade on Qatar over regional geopolitical differences. Today, everyone in the Arab construct, from the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia to Kuwait and Bahrain, is looking to side-step their own intra-Gulf differences, of which there are many, to manage these immediate challenges. Many of these Gulf states had built insurance ecosystems with Iran, either through economic cooperation, or in Saudi Arabia's case, a very public détente brokered by China in 2023, bringing the Shia and Sunni seats of power to a level of normalisation for the first time since 2016.

But these "new" regional security ideations will continue to have fundamental problems. For example, while Iran's actions are shaping responses today, Israel's display of unfettered dominance of air power from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf will also create anxieties. Israel's strike against Hamas in Doha, Qatar, in 2025, was a testament to this thinking. In addition, the Arab state's relationship with the U.S. will also come under the spotlight. While security cooperation is expected to increase, the Gulf states may have to be operationally more agile and unilaterally active instead of exclusively banking on the U.S.

The U.S. has fallen short

From the 2019 drone attack on Saudi oil facilities by the Houthis to the current conflict, direct American involvement in protecting the Gulf states has clearly not been sufficient. Recent comments by the White House that the Trump administration could ask its Gulf partners to commit finances to help cover the cost of the conflict with Iran raise further questions about what the U.S. role in regional security will be. A high level of American energy self-sufficiency means that Mr. Trump has actionable leverage. However, more than the supply of oil and gas, it is the management of international pricing that remains hugely volatile.

After this war, the West Asian security architecture will face hard questions. Beyond the role of the U.S., can a fool-proof system be created without Iran's buy-in? Will hedging security demands to Asian countries, including India – the main buyers of oil and gas – in the coming decades, be a successful tactic in matters of security? Can the Gulf act unanimously to pursue a common security aim despite internal fractures?

Hard questions await in the aftermath of a war reshaping West Asia as we have known it since the Second World War.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

War and diplomacy

The then American President, Harry S. Truman, took a calculated risk — after wide consultation with experts, including scientists — to drop the atomic bomb on Japan, in order to end the Second World War. The United Nations subsequently came into being and sought to establish a new world order. Now, decades later, President Donald Trump's unilateral decisions and executive actions have triggered a multi-pronged assault on nations, destabilising the global order. Who, then, will bell the cat? India's External Affairs Minister is focused on criticising Pakistan's initiatives. The Finance Minister maintains that the rupee is stable and the economy robust. The Prime Minister has cautioned that difficult days lie ahead and has sought the cooperation of the entire nation. As a country deeply affected by the West Asian conflict, can India's leadership put forward a concrete peace proposal and urge Mr. Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to halt this destructive war? Otherwise, China may seize the diplomatic initiative.

Cavery Palani,
Chennai

Under fire

Every American President leaves behind achievements that history records and remembers. Donald Trump's presidency, however, stands out for its many controversial decisions, actions, and policies, which project him as a "pro-America" yet often anti-world leader. This has invited widespread criticism, with many arguing that his approach has unsettled the global order even as he seeks recognition for peace. Recently, Americans took to the streets in protest. This marks the third such protest and it is striking that many Americans appear unconvinced by his agenda.

Kirti Wadhawan,
Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh

The oil of geopolitics

Energy security remains the fulcrum of geopolitics. When alliances are tested by war and supply shocks, the fragility of dependence becomes stark. NATO partners cannot afford complacency; diversification of energy sources and investment in renewables are pragmatic shields against coercion. Equally, diplomacy must temper transactional ultimatums with cooperative frameworks, for oil politics has a way of spilling into broader instability. Iran's stated willingness to end conflict if guarantees are honoured shows that credible assurances matter as much as military might.

Babu Crishna,
Bengaluru

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

How anti-corruption bodies are politicised

Yashovardhan Azad

Retired IPS officer who has served as the Central Information Commissioner, Secretary Security GOI and Special Director Intelligence Bureau

It began with great fanfare. Investigative agencies announced a massive corruption conspiracy case in Delhi's excise policy, alleging kickbacks of ₹100 crore and a deep nexus between business interests and politicians. The case, which was investigated by the Central Bureau of Investigation, with parallel proceedings by the Enforcement Directorate, led to the arrest of political figures, including then Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Deputy CM Manish Sisodia and businesspersons. Months of custody, prolonged interrogation, and repeated court hearings followed. The case dominated television debates for months, shaping electoral narratives and public perception.

Now, years later, the case ended with a judicial order from the trial court declining even to frame charges. The court concluded that the prosecution had failed to produce material establishing a *prima facie* case of criminal conspiracy or bribery. It also noted the absence of clear evidence linking policy decisions to illegal personal gain.

What began as one of the most sensational corruption prosecutions in recent memory has ended, and left us with an uncomfortable question – how did a case launched with such certainty fail to cross even the basic threshold required for trial?

Lingering questions

The most immediate question is institutional. Should an investigating agency initiate a prosecution of this magnitude without a reasonably solid evidentiary foundation?

The decision to register a First Information Report (FIR) is legally the beginning of a criminal process. But in politically sensitive cases, it also carries immense consequences – arrests, reputational damage, and long periods of incarceration before trial. When a case collapses at the threshold stage, it inevitably invites speculation that the investigation itself may have been driven by extraneous pressures.

The head of an investigative agency, therefore, needs to ensure that prosecutions are grounded in evidence rather than suspicion or political momentum.

The judicial threshold

The collapse of such high-profile cases is not unique to India. Corruption is among the most difficult crimes to prove anywhere in the world. This is because unlike violent crimes, corruption rarely leaves visible evidence. Money moves through intermediaries, shell companies, consultancy contracts, or political donations. The benefit may not even appear as cash – it may appear as favourable regulatory decisions or advantageous contracts. Hence, successful corruption prosecutions usually depend on a complex evidentiary architecture: financial trails, documentary records, digital communications, and corroborated witness testimonies.

If any link in this chain is missing, courts hesitate to infer criminal intent. The Supreme Court has repeatedly held that policy decisions taken by governments cannot automatically be criminalised unless there is clear evidence of dishonest intent and personal gain. This is exactly what was inferred by the court in the Delhi excise policy case. And while these principles protect individuals from politically motivated prosecutions, they also make corruption cases difficult to sustain.

However, the real difficulty may lie less in judicial standards and more in investigative capacity. Many corruption prosecutions in India still rely heavily on witness statements rather than on forensic financial analysis. Modern corruption investigations require sophisticated tools: forensic accounting, data analytics, tracing beneficial ownership of companies, and reconstruction of financial flows across jurisdictions. Agencies in countries such as Singapore and Hong Kong have developed specialised expertise in these areas.

In contrast, India's investigative ecosystem remains fragmented across multiple agencies with uneven coordination.

The political dilemma

The Kejriwal case illustrates a deeper structural dilemma in Indian democracy. On the one hand, corruption in public life remains a widely acknowledged problem. Allegations surround major public contracts from liquor policies to irrigation projects. Public confidence requires that such allegations be investigated seriously. On the other hand, criminal law must not become a weapon in political hands. If arrests and prosecutions are perceived as tools of the political executive, the legitimacy of anti-corruption institutions suffers irreparable damage.

While India's anti-corruption agencies have secured many convictions in trap cases where officials were caught accepting bribes, large policy-level corruption cases have rarely ended in successful prosecutions. When allegations of corruption surround large public contracts but rarely lead to convictions, public cynicism deepens. What India needs are credible examples of rigorous investigation and successful prosecution in huge bribery cases. Such cases would demonstrate that corruption can be punished without compromising legal fairness.

The excise policy case should therefore not be seen merely as a political victory or loss. It should prompt a broader institutional reflection. Investigative agencies must strengthen their capacity for financial forensics and evidence gathering. Prosecutors must ensure that cases brought before courts are built on robust evidentiary foundations. And political leaders must resist the temptation to deploy criminal law as a tool of partisan contest.

The head of an investigative agency needs to ensure that prosecutions are grounded in evidence rather than suspicion or political momentum

The burden of the new Chief Minister

In order to make a mark, the new government must tackle migration head-on

STATE OF PLAY

Sobhana K. Nair
sobhanak.nair@thehindu.co.in

The 'end of an era' is a cliché deployed ad nauseam for the political transition Bihar is set to witness as it awaits a new Chief Minister. However, there are several prisms through which to evaluate this change.

The most significant of these is the shift in the command centre. Thirty-six years after Lalu Prasad Yadav took office in 1990, breaking what had largely been a Congress continuum, the Chief Minister's seat is returning to a national party. Delhi, not Patna, will now call the shots. Whoever is chosen for the Chief Minister's chair will no longer be the final arbiter. He, or possibly she, will have to heed the leadership in Delhi. The political longevity that both Lalu and Nitish Kumar enjoyed is not something the incoming Chief Minister will inherit. They will have to guard their flanks, and watch for other aspirants who will be waiting for them to slip.

Imposing legacies

In his campaign speeches, Nitish Kumar often spoke of "Bihar kya tha" (what Bihar once was), invoking the alleged dark past of the State. This spectre of the 'Jungle Raj' cannot be deployed anymore. In the post-Nitish era, his successor's tenure will no longer be contrasted with the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) government led by Lalu Prasad Yadav; instead, it will be assessed against the 20 year-rule of Nitish Kumar. Having long feted Nitish Kumar as *sushasan babu* (the governance man), it will be difficult to sustain or surpass that narrative.

If Lalu Prasad Yadav addressed caste injustices, restoring dignity to marginalised communities, Nitish Kumar articulated a politics of Bihar *asmita* (identity), seeking to restore the State's pride among Biharis within and outside its borders. The new Chief Minister will need to shift into third gear, and address Bihar's most pressing problem: migration.

It is no longer enough that lower castes have found a voice or that the State has gained a measure of dignity through infrastructure development. The new Chief Minister must ensure that those born in Bihar also have the option to live and work there, without needing to go away in search of livelihoods. According to the 2011 Census, nine million people born in Bihar work outside the State, a figure that could rise in the latest enumeration.

Moreover, between the Lalu and Nitish governments, a precarious caste and communal balance was maintained. The RJD has often been derisively dismissed by its opponents as a Muslim-Yadav party. What is frequently overlooked is that Muslims and Yadavs were not natural allies. In fact, in several of Bihar's infamous riots, including the Bhagalpur riots, the two communities were on opposing sides. This alliance was crafted by Lalu Prasad through a combination of outreach and the promise of a meaningful stake in governance.

While the Nitish Kumar-led Janata Dal (United) (JD(U)) did not consistently secure the electoral endorsement of Muslims, the community did not feel threatened under his rule. Bihar has, by and large, maintained communal peace.

Sustaining this equilibrium will be a challenge for a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government.

Challenges and hopes

With the BJP at the helm, social anxieties over reservation could resurface. Some signs are already visible. On March 18, over 1,000 students from various organisations took to the streets, demanding that the University Grants Commission (UGC) Equity Rules, which had been stayed by the Supreme Court, be implemented without delay. The onus is on the BJP to select a Chief Minister who can offer a reassuring counter-narrative.

In a post-Nitish Bihar, possibilities also abound. Between the forward-caste-dominated BJP and the Yadav-dominated RJD, there are numerous smaller caste groups who lack a natural political home. In Nitish Kumar's absence, the JD (U) may not provide a stable base for these communities. This creates an opportunity for the Congress to fill the vacuum. However, it can emerge as a viable alternative only if it breaks out of the RJD's shadow and functions as an independent force rather than as an ancillary party.

On March 30, Nitish Kumar resigned from the Bihar Legislative Council. He is set to take oath in the Rajya Sabha by April 10. Belying expectations, there were no protests within the JD(U), and so far, the transition appears smooth.

But the real test of whether this stability will endure is only beginning.

An increase in colleges, students but not enough teachers

India's higher educational system must shift its focus from institutional expansion to ensuring equity and quality education

DATA POINT

Anand Kumar
M. K. Shravan
Rosa Abraham

While India's higher education sector has expanded rapidly in recent decades, with many new institutions and more students enrolled than ever before, has this expansion truly translated into equitable access alongside adequate capacity for delivering quality education? The State of Working India 2026 report tries to answer this.

India's higher education sector has seen massive expansion in the last few decades, at least in terms of the setting up of colleges and universities. From about 1,600 colleges and universities in 1950, most of which were publicly funded, the number had grown to over 69,000 by 2022. Most of this expansion has been recent, and driven largely by private providers. College density has also increased nationally, from 29 colleges per lakh youth in 2010 to 45 in 2021. But large regional disparities remain. For instance, many districts in northern and eastern States have fewer than 18 colleges per lakh youth population.

However, college expansion has not been matched by a commensurate expansion in teaching capacity. Regulatory norms recommend between 15 and 25 students per teacher. Even at its best, the average college had about 24 students per teacher in 2010. The situation worsened to 35.4 in 2016 and stood at 32 in 2021. Many northern districts consistently report particularly high student-teacher ratios, despite substantial institutional expansion in these regions **(Map 1)**. Faculty numbers have not kept pace with either the growth in institutions or the rise in enrolment. This is especially concerning since these regions account for a large share of India's youth population.

The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), which is the share of population aged 18-23 enrolled in higher education, has increased from 16% in 2011 to 28% as of 2022. India's GER in higher education is now broadly in line with countries at similar levels of per capita income. Importantly, enrolment rates for men and women have almost converged. Participation among disadvantaged social groups has also improved significantly over the past decade **(Chart 2)**. Between 2011 and 2022, enrolment rates among Scheduled Castes increased from 11% to 26%, while for Scheduled Tribes they rose from 8% to 21%.

However, graduates in India are still disproportionately drawn from the richest households. While the share of graduates from poorer households has increased between 2007-2017, it is still a long way away from equitable access.

Cost barrier

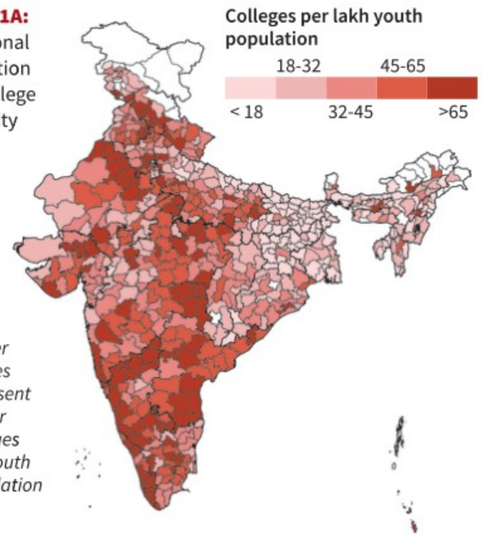
What students study reveals another layer of inequality. As household incomes rise, the likelihood of entering engineering and other professional courses increases. Conversely, students from low-income households are more likely to pursue courses in humanities and commerce streams **(Chart 3)**. Professional degree courses are significantly more expensive, and thus inaccessible for poorer, financially constrained households. A medicine degree costs ₹97,400 while an engineering degree costs ₹72,600 annually as of 2017-18. For poorer households, the annual fees for professional degrees often exceed their average per capita consumption expenditure.

Thus, expanding institutions alone is not sufficient. Bridging regional gaps, investing in faculty capacity, and addressing the cost barriers associated with professional education is critical to make higher education more inclusive. The focus must shift from expansion to equity, ensuring that higher education can translate into improved economic opportunities.

Course of privilege

AISHE and the NSS Social Expenditure on Education Surveys show that higher-income students prefer engineering/professional courses, while lower-income students choose humanities and commerce

MAP 1A: Regional variation in college density



MAP 1B: Regional variations in student - teacher ratio

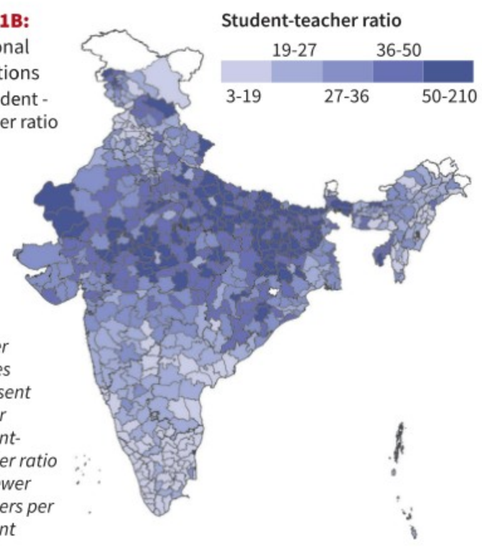


CHART 2: Gross enrolments across different social groups. Others include the General category and other groups not classified elsewhere

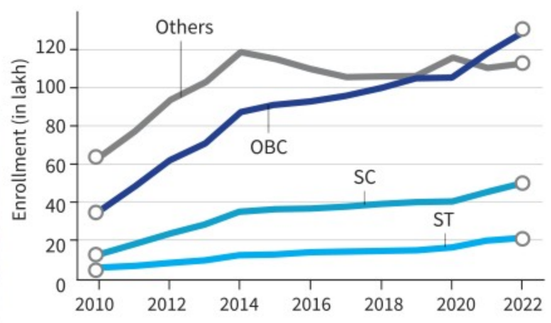
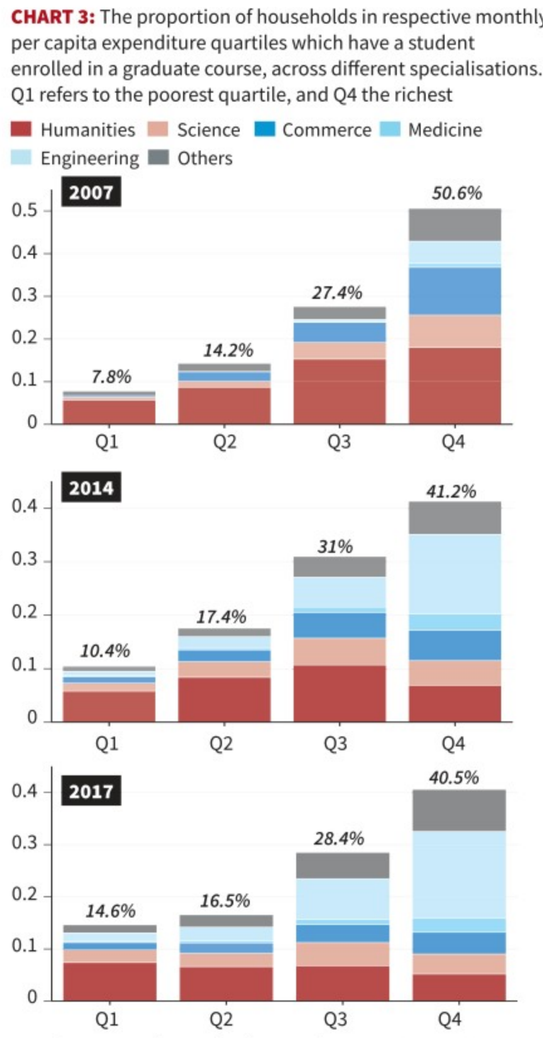


CHART 3: The proportion of households in respective monthly per capita expenditure quartiles which have a student enrolled in a graduate course, across different specialisations. Q1 refers to the poorest quartile, and Q4 the richest



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FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 2, 1976

TV delinked from AIR

New Delhi, April 1: A new organisation, "Doordarshan", to deal exclusively with television was inaugurated to-day by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

In her inaugural message, Mrs. Gandhi said the delinking was necessary "because these are two separate media, requiring different programmes and production techniques." Without this separation, the growth of television would be stinted, she added.

At the outset, the Prime Minister dispelled the belief of many people that television or SITE programmes were a luxury. "Television not only entertains, but also educates," she pointed out.

She explained to the viewers, who included not only those in the city, but also in thousands of villages covered by the SITE, that India had adopted a democratic form of Government and had followed it since Independence. But some people, the Opposition parties, construed it as a licence to say or do anything they liked. This led to indiscipline, not only in the political life but in other spheres as well. Selfishness led to hatred and greed, resulting in wrongful acts, which harmed the entire country. She brought home the point effectively by saying, "Think of the havoc wrought by Kayikeyi who thought only of her own interest and harmed in the process not only herself but many others".

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 2, 1926

Infanticide law in Ceylon

Colombo, March 31: A proposal is before the Ceylon Government to the effect, that an Act, similar to the English Infanticide Act of 1922 should be introduced.

At present, all women accused of infanticide are charged under certain classes in the Ceylon Penal Code as murderers.

In cases of infanticide, the accused person is sentenced to death.

But, in every instance, the sentence is contracted to a long term of imprisonment by the Governor, generally fifteen to twenty years.

The Board of Jail Visitors which considered the matter were of opinion that the term of imprisonment should be less on account of the circumstances in which the majority of the cases of infanticide are committed.

The Board has asked the Government for the release of ten women who are at present serving sentences for infanticide.

From Page One

Commercial LPG, jet fuel rates increased

For domestic flights, the price of ATF in Delhi was increased by about 8.6% to ₹1,04,927 per kilolitre (Kl), with a similar 8.6% in Mumbai.

For international flights by Indian airlines as well as chartered flights, the price was more than doubled to a record ₹2.07 lakh per kilolitre.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas defended the hike in ATF prices, saying that it has passed on only a partial increase in the prices to the airlines.

"In order to insulate the domestic travel costs from the substantial increase in international prices, PSU Oil Marketing Companies of the Ministry of Petroleum, in consultation with Ministry of Civil Aviation, have passed only a partial and staggered increase of 25% (only ₹15/litre) to the airlines," the Ministry said in a post on social media.

The Ministry noted that OMCs are bearing an average loss of ₹380 on the sale of every LPG cylinder, given current rates. "Cumulative losses by end-May will reach approximately ₹40,484 crore," the Ministry said in a social media post.

Public-sector OMCs are also incurring losses of about ₹24.4 for every litre of petrol and ₹104.99 for every litre of diesel sold, as of today, the Ministry added. IndiGo responded to the hike by revising its fuel surcharges.

The ATF rate for scheduled domestic carriers has been increased by ₹21 per litre, whilst those for non-scheduled and international airlines are up more than ₹110 per litre, Ministry joint secretary Sujata Sharma told journalists. She clarified that these are retail prices, not the base prices of the fuel.

Though the government referred to a "staggered increase" in ATF rates, Ms. Sharma could not offer any clarity on the timing of the next such hike. "When will it happen next, I cannot say now," she said.

Commercial LPG rates, on the other hand, are deregulated, market-determined, and revised monthly. "Their consumption is less than 10% of the total LPG consumed in the country," the Petroleum Ministry said.

Exclusion doesn't repeal voting rights forever: SC

The Bench directed that the poll body should provide the tribunals complete access to the reasons and remarks recorded by adjudicating officers on why "logical discrepancy was justified and deletion of a person from the electoral roll was warranted".

The appellate tribunals, notified by the EC on March 20, are presided over by former Chief Justices and judges of High Courts. Chief Justice Kant said the appellate hearings before seasoned judges in the tribunals would ensure that justice would be done to those excluded incorrectly.

The hearing on Wednesday commenced with the Bench reading out a communication from the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court that judicial officers, deployed as Election Registration Officers and Assistant Election Registration Officers (EROs/AEROs) for the SIR exercise, had already disposed of nearly 47 lakh of a total 60 lakh claims under adjudication.

The Bench conveyed the High Court Chief Justice's assurance that the remaining claims would be disposed of by April 7.

"If somebody has a right [to vote] we cannot thwart, if somebody does not have a right to vote, we can stop the person. It is as simple as that," senior advocate Dama Seshadhiri Naidu, for the EC, submitted.

Senior advocate Shyam Divan, for the State government, submitted that out of the approximately over 40 lakh claims disposed of, there was a "very high exclusion rate" of 45%. "And these are all mapped individuals," Mr. Divan said.

The court listed the case on April 6.

Centre puts off FCRA Bill as protests erupt in Lok Sabha

Amendment Bill is not aimed at any religion but at curbing misuse of foreign contributions, says Kiren Rijiju, counters narrative that it could target minority institutions that receive foreign funds

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Amid strong protests from Opposition benches, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Wednesday informed the Lok Sabha that the government did not intend to bring a Bill to amend the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) in the ongoing Budget Session.

Mr. Rijiju accused the Opposition of misleading people in Kerala and across the country ahead of the Assembly election in the State. "I had told the Congress yesterday [Tuesday] that since the Bill has been introduced, it has been listed for consideration and passage for Wednesday. But today [Wednesday], the FCRA (amendment) Bill is not being taken up for discussion," he said.

Protests erupted in the House as soon as the Question Hour began at 11 a.m., with Opposition members, mainly from Kerala, raising slogans against the provisions of the FCRA (Amendment) Bill.

On the defensive: Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju speaks in the Rajya Sabha in New Delhi on Wednesday. SANSAD TV

Mr. Rijiju said the Bill, introduced last month, seeks to protect national security and interest and asserted that it is not aimed at any religion or organisation. It is intended to prevent misuse of foreign contributions, he said.

"Since there are elections in Kerala, the Congress and the Communists are spreading wrong things about the Bill," he said.

As Opposition members trooped into the Well of the House, Speaker Om Birla adjourned the proceedings till 12 noon. Even before the House met, Opposition members protested outside the main entrance of Parliament.

It is not only the Opposition protests but also pressure from the Kerala unit of the BJP that seems to have forced the government to rethink pushing the FCRA (Amendment) Bill in the Budget session.

Key proposal

One of the key proposals of the Bill is to establish a "Designated Authority" to manage and dispose of foreign funds and assets of NGOs whose registration is suspended, cancelled, or not renewed. In poll-bound Kerala, a narrative has emerged that these provisions can be misused to crack down on minority institutions such as churches, which may receive foreign funds.

Such a concern could not have come up at a worse time for the BJP as the party, after it won one out of the 20 seats in Kerala in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, has been reaching out to the Christian community in the State to build a dedicated vote base.

Senior CPI(M) leader and Rajya Sabha member John Brittas accused the Union government of blocking attempts to seek elementary information on the government's policy decisions regarding FCRA, saying routine parliamentary questions on the issue are now treated as "secret in nature".

In a detailed post on X, Mr. Brittas said that since 2024 he has submitted eight questions seeking clarity on FCRA suspensions, cancellations, non-renewals, fresh registrations, and the removal of public access to NGO-wise data from the FCRA dashboard. "Yet, none of those questions elicited any response," he wrote.

CAPF Bill passed by Rajya Sabha after Opposition walkout

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Opposition says government has not addressed concerns raised by MPs of various parties

The Central Armed Police Forces (General Administration) Bill, which was passed in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday, will further strengthen the security system of the country, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said, while replying to the debate on the legislation.

The Opposition walked out after Mr. Rai's speech, alleging that the government had not addressed any concerns about the Bill raised by their MPs and senior officers of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).

Mr. Rai maintained that the Bill was an important step in resolving several inconsistencies in CAPF service rules, cadre management, and appointment-related issues, among others, to boost the efficiency and morale of the forces.

"The Bill aims to create an umbrella structure for resolving several such anomalies and streamlining its structure for better coordination and implementation," Mr. Rai said, while maintaining that the Bill is not against the federal structure.

Soon after Mr. Rai's speech, Opposition Leader Mallikarjun Kharge reiterated the demand that the Bill should be referred to a select committee of Parliament. He alleged that Mr. Rai had not addressed the core issues raised by the Opposition on the institutionalisation of deputation, adverse impact on morale and career progression, lack of consultation and representation, and lack of concern for judicial direction.

Nationalist Congress Party (Sharad Pawar) MP Fauzia Khan said the Bill was judicial invasion wearing the clothes of law.

"Imagine joining one of these forces as an Assistant Commandant, young, ready to serve, 16 years have passed, you have fought insurgents, you have earned your promotion, and yet you have not received it," Ms. Khan said.

PM chairs Cabinet panel meeting over West Asia conflict

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday chaired a special meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) to review measures taken by various Ministries regarding the ongoing conflict in West Asia and to also discuss further initiatives to be taken. This was the second special CCS meeting on the matter, the first having been held on March 22.

"The Cabinet Secretary briefed about the action taken to ensure supply of petroleum products, particularly LNG/LPG, and sufficient power availability," the government said in a release. "Sources are being diversified for procurement of LPG with new inflows from different countries."

The Cabinet Secretary informed Mr. Modi that Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) is being sourced from different countries and that LPG prices for domestic consumers have remained the same as before the crisis.

'Safeguard citizens'

He also spoke about the various initiatives taken to expand the number of Piped Natural Gas connections in the country.

"The Prime Minister assessed the availability of critical needs for the common man," the release added. "He discussed availability of fertilizers in the country and steps being taken to ensure their availability in the Kharif and Rabi seasons. He said all efforts must be made to safeguard the citizens from the impact of this conflict. The Prime Minister also emphasised smooth flow of authentic information to the public to prevent misinformation and rumour mongering."

India to renew push for faster FTA implementation during PM's EU visit

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Ties with European countries will be on top of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's travel agenda this summer as the European Union's Parliament discusses ratifying the EU-India Free Trade Agreement, which was announced in January.

Officials are finalising dates for the five-nation Nordic Summit with Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, as well as a bilateral visit to the Netherlands, both of which were cancelled last year due to the Pahalgam attack.

In addition, Mr. Modi will also travel to Évian-les-Bains in France for the G-7 Summit outreach hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron on June 15-16, where U.S. President Donald Trump and leaders of Germany, Italy, U.K., Japan and Canada will meet.

Narendra Modi

While the impact of the West Asia war on the global economy is expected to overshadow all the meetings, officials said the aim of the visits is to discuss trade and technology opportunities before the EU-India FTA is put in place.

On Wednesday, an 11-member parliamentary delegation of the EU wound up a three-day visit to Delhi, where they met with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. They also held a meeting of the India-European Parliament Parliamentary Friendship Group. The delegation, led by Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Anjelika Niebler, discussed fast-tracking the FTA voting process through the European Parliament. EU officials said that they hoped the agreement could be implemented within the year.

"The India-EU FTA represents a defining milestone in our partnership, poised to unlock new opportunities for businesses, MSMEs, and skilled professionals on both sides," Mr. Goyal said, describing his meeting with the delegation. "We discussed pathways for its early implementation, alongside continued constructive engagement," he added.

Officials of the Ministry of External Affairs are discussing the possibility of the Nordic Summit in Oslo in May, as well as Mr. Modi's bilateral visit to the Netherlands. Much will depend on the formation of the government in Denmark, where Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen's party didn't win a clear majority in last week's election, but talks for a coalition government are on. In Netherlands, Prime Minister Rob Jetten formed his government in February and officials confirmed that they are in talks about a visit in May or June.

After an introductory call with Mr. Modi on Monday, Mr. Jetten said in a post that he looks forward to welcoming him to the Netherlands "soon", and taking forward the strategic partnership on defence, water management, innovation and trade. "With everything going on in the world at the moment, now is the time to strengthen our cooperation," he added.

"[We] exchanged views on the situation in West Asia and emphasised the need for early restoration of peace and stability in the region," Mr. Modi said in his post.

'Indian Navy was minutes away from striking Pak.'

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

The Indian Navy was minutes away from striking Pakistan from the sea during Operation Sindoor, when Islamabad requested stoppage of kinetic actions, Navy chief Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi said on Wednesday.

The Navy chief was speaking at the naval investiture ceremony here, where he awarded Yudh Seva Medals to two top naval officers for their distinguished service during Operation Sindoor. "It is not a hidden fact any more that we were just minutes away from striking Pakistan from the sea, when they requested stoppage of kinetic actions," he said.

Lt. Gen. Dhiraj Seth takes charge as Army Vice-Chief amid rejig

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Lieutenant-General Dhiraj Seth on Wednesday assumed charge as the Vice-Chief of the Army Staff after the Indian Army announced a series of top-level appointments across key operational commands.

An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, Lieutenant-General Seth was commissioned to the Armoured Corps in December 1986. Over nearly four decades, he has built an operational profile across varied terrains and conflict environments, including counter-insurgency experience.

In other key changes, Lieutenant-General V.M.B. Krishnan assumed charge as the GOC-in-C, Eastern Command, taking over from Lieutenant-General R.C. Tiwari, who superannuated on March 31. Lieutenant-General Pushpendra Pal Singh, who previously served as the Vice-Chief of the Army Staff, took over as the GOC-in-C, Western Command.

Lieutenant-General Dhiraj Seth

55,000 households utilise Census self-enumeration portal on day one

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Around 55,000 households used the self-enumeration portal on the first day of the Population Census 2027 website that went live in eight States and Union Territories, the Union Home Ministry said on Wednesday. The online details will, however, be verified by enumerators during a door-to-door survey 15 days later.

Among the first to fill in the details of 33 questions being asked in the first phase – the House Listing Operations and Housing Census (HLO) – were President Droupadi Murmu, Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah.

A woman entering her details in the self-enumeration portal in Prayagraj on Wednesday. PTI

In the first phase, self-enumeration began in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Goa, Karnataka, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Odisha, Sikkim, New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) area and Delhi Cantonment Board areas of Delhi.

One mobile phone number can be used to register only one household.

The portal opens 15 days prior to the commencement of the HLO phase and in these eight States and U.T.s, the first phase will commence on April 16 and continue till May 15.

All other States will have to complete the first-phase enumeration by September 30, whereas in Ladakh and snow-bound areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, both the phases are to completed by September 30. The second phase of population enumeration – where each individual's information in the household, such as religion, caste etc. will be asked – is to be conducted in February 2027 for the remaining States.

"The self-enumeration exercise is a secure, web-based facility available in 16 regional languages. For the first time, respondents can fill in their details online at their convenience before the enumerator's visit. Enumerators will carry out door-to-door visits in all allocated houselisitng blocks as in previous Censuses, while Self-Enumeration serves as an additional facility. To participate in Self-Enumeration, respondents can log in to the portal se.census.gov.in using their mobile number and basic credentials. Upon successful submission, a unique Self-Enumeration ID (SE ID) is generated, which will be shared with the enumerator during the subsequent field visit for confirmation," the Ministry said.

Parliament may go into recess, meet on April 16

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Budget Session of Parliament is unlikely to end on April 2 as per the original schedule. Sources said that government is mulling reconvening Parliament on April 16 to debate amendments to the women's reservation Act 2023, with an aim to speed up its implementation.

The government has proposed that the delimitation, the essential step towards implementing the Women's Reservation Act 2023, will be based on the 2011 Census.

The Budget session, as per the sources, will not be adjourned sine die on April 2. The Chair in both Houses will announce a recess.

ASSEMBLY POLLS

Mamata did nothing for Muslims: Owaisi

All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) president Asaduddin Owaisi on Wednesday started his campaign for the West Bengal Assembly election by addressing a public meeting at Naoda in Murshidabad with his ally, Aam Janata Unnyan Party (AJUP) leader Humayun Kabir.

Accusing Trinamool Congress chairperson and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of doing nothing for the Muslims in the State, Mr. Owaisi said the community was fighting to create a Muslim leadership in Bengal.

"We want our rights. We want participation. We will not bow our heads in front of Mamata (Banerjee). We will not be afraid of (Narendra) Modi," the AIMIM leader said.

Mr. Owaisi said he and Mr. Kabir will also fight the 2029 Lok Sabha polls together.

AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, and Aam Janata Unnayan Party chief Humayun Kabir. PTI

19% of Assam's elderly opt for home voting

A total of 26,412 elderly and differently-abled voters in Assam have been approved for home voting.

According to a statement issued by the Joint State Electoral Officer on Tuesday, 19,774 voters who opted to vote from home are aged 85 or above. A similar option has been exercised by 6,638 persons with disabilities.

The elderly and the persons with disabilities approved for home voting constitute 19.32% and 3.23% of the eligible voters in the respective categories, the statement said. The final list published on January 22, after the Special Revision of electoral rolls, said Assam has almost 2.5 crore voters.

The officer said the home voting process has begun and is scheduled to be completed by April 5, four days ahead of polling on April 9.

> A *Bunty aur Babli* govt. [is] running in Assam. The first part is playing in the State now, and it is for the people to stop the release of its second part
>
> **PAWAN KHERA**
> Congress leader

Violence over Cong. nominees in West Bengal

Violence broke out at the Congress office in Kolkata on Wednesday during protests over candidate selection, leaving at least one worker injured, the police said. Workers staged a demonstration seeking the cancellation of "outsider" candidates, which escalated into clashes. PTI

> LDF means loot, division, failure, while UDF means untrustworthy, dishonesty, fraud; those who stole shrine gold, will be shown the door
>
> **RAJNATH SINGH**
> Union Minister

A senior police officer trying to stop the Trinamool Congress supporters protesting over the SIR issue near the CEO's office in Kolkata on Wednesday. ANI

Tribunals work from today, but many Bengal voters will stay excluded

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

The Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court on Wednesday informed the Supreme Court that judicial officers had already disposed of nearly 47 lakh of the 60 lakh claims under adjudication during the special intensive revision in West Bengal.

During the hearing, a three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant took note of the High Court Chief Justice's assurance that the remaining claims would be disposed of by April 7.

Electors whose names are struck off during adjudication can approach appellate tribunals presided over by former Chief Justices and judges of the High Courts. Though the Election Commission notified the tribunals on March 20, they are yet to begin functioning.

High exclusion rate

Data shared by the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, West Bengal, shows that after four supplementary lists, deletions among cases under adjudication are about 40%. This means that of the 60 lakh voters, about 24 lakh rejected by the judicial officers may approach the tribunals. Senior advocate Shyam Divan, who appeared for the State government before the Supreme Court on Wednesday, pointed out this fact, and said that electors under adjudication had a "very high exclusion rate" of about 45%.

Names of about 63 lakh electors were deleted when the final roll was released on February 28. If the 24 lakh deletions during adjudication are added, the total will reach 87 lakh. The voter list of the State has 7.04 crore electors, which includes 60 lakh cases under adjudication. The tribunals will start working from April 2, and it is unlikely that all rejected cases will be resolved before polling, scheduled in two phases on April 23 and 29.

With over 80 lakh deletions, the electoral roll is likely to fall below 7 crore voters. During the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the State had 7.6 crore voters while the figure was 7.34 crore during the 2021 Assembly election.

Mamata's take

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee welcomed the developments in the Supreme Court, saying that her party would support electors approaching tribunals. "I am happy today. Attempts to include voters from outside have been thwarted by the Supreme Court," she said.

Addressing a public meeting in Nanoor, Ms. Banerjee alleged that newly appointed officials by the Election Commission were tasked with rejecting nominations of her party candidates, and urged them to be cautious while filing nominations.

Trinamool's protests

Over the past two days, supporters of the Trinamool Congress have been staging demonstrations outside the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), alleging bulk submission of Form 6 applications by the BJP. On Wednesday, prohibitory orders under Section 153 of Bharatiya Nyay Samhita were imposed outside the CEO's office in Kolkata and protesters were asked to vacate the premises.

In Bodoland, fight for peace, identity 'unites' political rivals BPF and UPPL

In the Bodoland Territorial Region, BPF in alliance with the BJP is taking on the UPPL, which till a few months ago was with the saffron party; while the UPPL blames the BPF for communal tension in the region, both concur on the need to protect the Bodo identity and need to build lasting peace

IN FOCUS

Abhinay Lakshman
KOKRAJHAR

As the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party fuels the rhetoric of protecting indigenous identities in the run-up to the Assembly election in Assam, an effort is underway to preserve the Bodo regional identity in the north-western part of the State, which is driving the electoral campaign in the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR).

Here, issues being raised include the need to protect the Bodo identity, increased autonomy for the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), youth welfare, and lasting peace. The BJP finds itself in the middle of a delicate balancing act given the history of its alliances and conflicts with key regional powers – the Bodo People's Front (BPF) and the United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) – as recently as the 2025 BTC elections.

On Tuesday, hundreds marked the birth anniversary of Bodofa Upendra Nath Brahma, known as the father of the Bodo movement, in Dotma, his birthplace. The UPPL candidate for the Dotma constituency, Raju Jumar Narzary, paid his respects before addressing voters.

Even as Mr. Narzary spoke of "increased communal tension" after the BPF's victory in the BTC elections months ago, and the need to fight for more administrative powers for the Council, about 500 metres away, at the BPF's office, campaign workers spoke of their focus on bringing the region's communities together and ensuring peace under the NDA's banner.

Direct fight

Across the 15 Assembly constituencies in the BTR, the BPF, which has allied with the BJP in this election, is contesting 11 seats, while the BJP is contesting four. The UPPL, which is going solo, is contesting all 15 seats, with a direct contest expected with its regional rival BPF on 11, and contests with the BJP on the other four.

The Congress has put up candidates for 13 seats, one seat each is being contested by its ally Raijor Dal (Manas) and the Trinamool Congress (Goreswar), with some seats even seeing the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha entering the race.

Just months ago, the BJP and the UPPL had parted ways ahead of the 2025 BTC election, which saw the BPF, in control of the council from 2005 to 2020, come back to power in the Sixth Schedule region. As a result, the chief of the BPF, Hangrama Mohilary, was elected head of the BTC, dislodging Pramod Boro, leader of the UPPL.

Key fight: The BJP and the UPPL had parted ways ahead of the 2025 BTC election, which saw the BPF, in control of the council from 2005-2020, come back to power in the Sixth Schedule region. FILE PHOTO

Mr. Boro was elected as the BTC chief in 2020 after forming a post-poll alliance with the BJP. Following his loss in the BTC elections, Mr. Boro was earlier this year elected unopposed to one of Assam's Rajya Sabha seats, even as he has now chosen to contest this Assembly election from the Tamulpur constituency.

In this constituency (reserved for STs), Mr. Boro will face not just the BJP's candidate, Biswajit Daimary, but also the Congress's Rafel Daimary. Just before severing ties with the BJP, Mr. Boro had been driving for increased autonomy of the BTC region, holding meetings with Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi to pass the 125th Constitution Amendment enabling more autonomy.

In the BTR, the contest appears to be a head-to-head fight between the BPF and the UPPL, even as Bodo outfits such as the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU), which kick-started the movement for an autonomous Bodo region, has made public calls for the two parties to unite.

Call for autonomy

However, the campaigns of both parties in the region are focused on fighting for increased autonomy both in the Assam Assembly and in Parliament, lasting peace, and the rivalry between the two for control over BTC politics. The UPPL is blaming the BPF's return to the BTC for issues such as communal violence that was seen in Karigaon in January and an alleged rise in gambling, and consumption of drugs and alcohol among the youth. The BPF's campaign is focused on highlighting its support from the NDA, which, it argues, will help ensure peace and stability in the region.

Another significant issue that both campaigns are confronting is the Assam Cabinet's decision last November to add six communities to the State's ST list, which had sparked widespread protests across the Bodoland region, led by the ABSU.

The ABSU's president-in-charge, Kwrwmdao Wary, said, "There is fear that the propositions being discussed for the addition of six new communities will alter the nature of the Bodoland region. In addition to the Bodo tribal communities, there are other communities living here peacefully also. And we want the welfare of all of these communities. But it has to be understood that this Bodoland region is a result of the Bodo people's struggles, and the proposed ST calculations risk altering that."

But even as Mr. Wary insisted that the ABSU cannot publicly speak about the ongoing election campaign, the outfit has traditionally been associated with the UPPL.

Congress planning law to appease religious minorities in Assam: PM

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday warned the people of Assam against a "dangerous communal violence law" that the Congress allegedly plans to introduce in the State, to target the "majority community" and "appease the minorities".

Addressing election rallies in Dhemaji and Sonitpur districts for the Bharatiya Janata Party, he highlighted the development projects of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government in Assam, but indicated that a Congress design targeting the Hindu community could undo the progress seen in the past 10 years.

Mr. Modi claimed that the Congress had tried to enact a communal violence law before the 2014 Lok Sabha election to appease its "fixed vote bank", which would have been unfair to the majority community.

"The law sought to hold the majority community responsible for riots, and religious minorities were considered victims forever. The BJP-NDA did not allow this Bill, communal in itself, to pass. Now, 12 years later, the Congress is announcing a similar law in Assam," he said.

Tea time: Prime Minister Narendra Modi plucking tea leaves during his visit to a tea estate in Dibrugarh on Wednesday. ANI

Modi highlights party's initiatives to safeguard the dignity, safety, and rights of women and marginalised people

"It has become clear that the Congress, which has become the Muslim League-Maoist Congress, can do anything to be in power," Mr. Modi said.

'Assamese identity'

The Prime Minister pointed to the BJP's electoral promise to implement the Uniform Civil Code in Assam with measures to protect tribal traditions in the Sixth Schedule areas as evidence that the BJP walks the talk. He also stressed the party's initiatives to safeguard the dignity, safety, and rights of women and marginalised people.

Mr. Modi also criticised the Congress for settling foreigners in Assam and making the native people minorities in their own land. "The BJP-NDA government will not allow the land of farmers, tribal people, and our forests to be occupied by infiltrators. Assamese pride and identity will be maintained. This is Modi's guarantee," he said.

Lauding the BJP-led State government's push for development, he said that Assam would soon be known globally not only for its tea, but also for chip production. "Phones, cars, TVs, and fridges will soon run on chips made in Assam. This is our road map for a developed Assam," he said.

NDA hat-trick

The Prime Minister said the transformation of Assam under BJP governance had made its youth embrace a new future, far removed from the "dark era" of Congress rule, when the State was known for bombs, guns, riots, and curfews. Reaffirming the BJP's commitment to lasting peace, development, and the protection of Assamese culture and identity, Mr. Modi predicted that the NDA would achieve a hat-trick win in the Assembly election.

Exuding confidence about the performance of the NDA, he took a swipe at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. "Assam is getting a BJP-NDA government for the third straight time. The Congress's so-called prince will suffer a century of defeat," he said.

Earlier, Mr. Modi visited the Manohari Tea Estate in Dibrugarh district and interacted with women plantation workers there. "We are very proud of the efforts of each and every tea garden family. Their hard work and perseverance have enhanced Assam's pride," he said in a post on social media platform X.

PM's policies pushing country deeper into crisis, says Priyanka

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been pushing the country deeper into a crisis by becoming a slave of the United States.

Addressing rallies for the candidates of the Congress and ally Assam Jatiya Parishad in eastern Assam on Wednesday, she also said the people of the State were tired of the "mafia and syndicate rule" of the Himanta Biswa Sarma-led government.

Ms. Vadra said the Bharatiya Janata Party was running a "double-slavery government" instead of the much-vaunted double-engine government.

"Modi*ji* has become America's slave, and the country is in a crisis because of his policies. And Himanta*ji* is Modi*ji*'s slave," she said.

"We want a government that does not threaten or scare you, but serves you, works honestly for you, and strengthens your culture and civilisation," she said, outlining a series of guarantees if Congress comes to power in Assam.

The guarantees include ₹50,000 for women to start a small business and a health insurance cover of up to ₹25 lakh.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra

Attacking the Chief Minister, Ms. Vadra said "one family" was looting everything in Assam and handing over resources of the people to corporate houses. She accused the BJP under Mr. Sarma of being neck-deep in scams.

"The people are tired of the mafia and syndicate rule, paying [goonda] taxes everywhere," she said. Ms. Vadra also promised justice for the late Zubeen Garg. She said that a Congress government would deliver justice for the cultural icon within its first 100 days.

Later, she denied the BJP allegation that the Congress was politicising his death. "Seeking justice for a respected figure is a political duty, not opportunism," she said.

INBRIEF

Shah asks Manipur CM to accelerate peace process

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday asked Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh to accelerate the ongoing peace process in the State and approved the creation of an all-woman police battalion, according to a Manipur government statement. Mr. Singh called on the Home Minister at Parliament House complex, where the two leaders discussed the law and order situation in the State. During the meeting, Mr. Shah asked the Chief Minister to accelerate the peace process and consolidate the growing bonhomie among different communities, the statement said.

Former U.P. MLC declared a fugitive economic offender

A special court has declared a former Member of Legislative Council (MLC) in Uttar Pradesh, Mohammed Iqbal, a fugitive economic offender, and ordered confiscation of the attached assets worth ₹995.75 crore, on an application filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED). He is currently said to be in the United Arab Emirates. The court issued the order on Tuesday, designating Mr. Iqbal under the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act. The ED initiated its probe in 2019 based on an FIR registered by the CBI, alleging that Mr. Iqbal and his associates fraudulently acquired multiple sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh through a manipulated disinvestment process.

H.S. Phoolka, who fought for 1984 riot victims, joins BJP

Senior advocate H.S. Phoolka, who fought for the 1984 anti-Sikh riots victims, on Wednesday joined the BJP in the presence of Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri and others at the party headquarters in New Delhi. After making his political debut with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in 2014, Mr. Phoolka became the Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly in 2017. However, in 2018, he quit as MLA expressing displeasure over the Congress government's failure to take action against those named in the Justice Ranjit Singh Commission report for their role in police action that led to deaths in the wake of sacrilege cases.

Itanagar eateries told to drop meat references from names

Hotels and restaurants in Itanagar, the capital of Arunachal Pradesh, have been asked to drop animal meat references such as pork, beef, chicken, and mutton from their names. The Itanagar Municipal Corporation stated in its order on Tuesday that no new trade licences will be issued for eateries with names that refer to any meat type. The order noted that many eateries have been obtaining trade licences using "business nomenclature specifically referring to particular animal meats". It said such naming practices have been deemed inappropriate and inconsistent with prevailing norms regarding animal welfare sensitivities and public decency.

Terrorist killed in operation in central Kashmir, says Army

Security forces conduct joint searches in a forested area in Ganderbal; in another development, doctor couple has been charged under UAPA for spread of misleading information on social media

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

A terrorist has been killed in an ongoing anti-terror operation in Ganderbal district of central Kashmir, the Army said on Wednesday.

"During the night of March 31 (Tuesday), the cordon was tactically reorganised amid the intermittent firing under way. Own troops effectively retaliated with calibrated response resulting in one terrorist eliminated," the Army said. The operation is in progress.

The Army said the joint search operation was launched in a jungle area of Ganderbal after receiving specific intelligence inputs. Security forces suspected the presence of two terrorists at the encounter site.

The slain militant has been identified as 28-year-old Rashid Ahmad Mughal, a resident of the Lar area in Ganderbal district.

Meanwhile, a doctor couple from south Kashmir was charged by the J&K Police's special cell, Counter Intelligence Kashmir (CIK), on Wednesday under provisions of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) for "misusing social media platforms".

The police keep guard near an encounter site in the Arahama area of Ganderbal district in Kashmir on Wednesday. IMRAN NISSAR

'Criminal conspiracy'

A police spokesperson said the CIK produced a chargesheet before the court of the Special Judge designated under the NIA Act, Srinagar, against Dr. Umer Farooq Bhat, and his wife Shahzada Akther, residents of Kulgam.

"Akther, in a well-planned criminal conspiracy with members of the proscribed terrorist organisation Dukhtaran-e-Millat, and in active connivance with her husband Dr. Bhat, was involved in the deliberate creation and dissemination of false, fabricated, and distorted narratives regarding the situation in Kashmir," said the spokesperson. Police had lodged a First Information Report in 2025 under Sections 152, 62(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Sections 13, 38, 39 of the UAPA.

"Investigation revealed that the accused persons were engaged in the misuse of social media platforms, including encrypted messaging applications, to manipulate facts and spread misleading information. The content disseminated by them was aimed at promoting secessionist and separatist sentiments, thereby fostering disaffection, hatred, and enmity against the Union of India," said a police statement.

The accused, according to the police, were also involved in uploading and circulating content intended to create disharmony and criminal ill-will among different religious groups, "with the deliberate intent to provoke and radicalise youth, incite violence, and disturb public order".

Bring back son of J&K resident from Pak.: HC to Centre

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Court says that the son must be allowed to pursue his plea for extension of long-term visa

The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has instructed the Union Home Ministry to take steps to bring back an Indian citizen's Pakistan-born son, who was deported after the April 2025 Pahalgam attack.

Justice M.A. Chowdhary, hearing the plea filed by Sajjad Ahmed, 42, issued directions to the Ministry "to retrieve the petitioner's son, namely Aasim Sajjad, aka Fardin Sajjad, pursuant to 'Leave India Notice' dated April 25".

The court held that the son, who was around 18 years old when deported to Pakistan in 2025, should be allowed "to pursue his application for extension of long-term visa". The court also directed the Ministry to consider and grant citizenship against the application filed by him under Section 5 (1) (d) of the Citizenship Act, 1955.

"[Sajjad Ahmed] being an Indian citizen, this court, is of the considered opinion that having regard to the sacrosanct human values and rights, the court must step in to pass certain directions," Justice Chowdhary observed, while passing the directions to the Home Ministry. The court asked the Ministry to carry out the exercise "expeditiously, preferably within a period of eight weeks".

Mr. Ahmed from Rajouri visited Pakistan in 2005, married Shabnum Kouser, and had a son in 2006. He returned to India in 2007 and sought annual visa extensions for his family on the grounds of marriage. His wife died in 2013, and his son's visa was extended until 2015. According to the family's plea, the father moved several applications through proper channels before the competent authority for seeking declaration of his son a citizen of India "but neither the son had been declared a citizen nor visa extended in his favour".

CBI files case against RCom, Anil Ambani on LIC plaint

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday registered a fresh case against Reliance Communications Limited (RCom), businessman Anil Ambani and others for allegedly causing a wrongful loss of ₹3,750 crore to Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India.

It is alleged that LIC was fraudulently induced to subscribe to Non Convertible Debentures (NCDs) worth ₹4,500 crore based on false representations by RCom and its management regarding financial health of the company, and security and asset cover offered to LIC while subscribing the NCDs.

The LIC made the complaint on the findings of a forensic audit report that said RCom and its management had allegedly resorted to misuse of funds raised from banks and financial institutions.

NSCN-K seeks 'religious conversion', Arunachal govt. tells UAPA tribunal

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Arunachal Pradesh government told an Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) tribunal recently that the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K), a banned outfit which seeks the merger of Naga-dominated areas in India and Myanmar, wants to "convert people to Christianity" in order to have a "homogenous society for a common cause".

A UAPA tribunal on March 19 upheld a Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) notification of September 22, 2025 to declare the NSCN-K an unlawful association under the UAPA, 1967 for another five years. The group was involved in the June 4, 2015 ambush of an Army convoy in Manipur in which 18 Army personnel were killed.

In its deposition, the Arunachal Pradesh government said other than the forceful conversion of locals to Christianity, the group intends to "bring all the sub-tribes under one banner Tangsang-Naga" and "this is indicative of a deeper conspiracy to create homogenous demographic structure".

Remains of an Army truck after an ambush by NSCN-K militants on a convoy in Manipur in 2015, killing 18 personnel. AFP

The outfit is active in the Tirap, Changlang and Longding (TCL) districts of Arunachal Pradesh. The State government did not depose on these lines before the tribunal that was set up in 2015, when the outfit was banned first.

It added that the group indulges in unlawful interference in electoral process, drug trafficking and has established hideouts/camps in the three districts to attack/ambush security force personnel.

Named after its leader S.S. Khaplang, who died in Myanmar in 2017, the NSCN-K was formed in January 1990 after a split from the parent group, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, in 1988. The latter is now known as the NSCN (Isak-Muivah) and has been in peace talks with the government since 1997. The National Investigation Agency had declared a reward of ₹17 lakh for Khaplang's arrest for executing the ambush on the Army convoy. The NSCN-K was initially banned for five years in 2020, extended for another five years in 2025.

The Ministry informed the tribunal that in the past five years, NSCN-K factions were involved in 29 incidents of violence, in which 18 deaths and injuries to 16 security personnel and civilians occurred; 71 cases were registered with chargesheets filed in 56 cases and 35 cadres were prosecuted or convicted. Eighty-five cadres were arrested, 69 cadres surrendered and 51 other criminal activities, including kidnappings, were reported.

The Ministry submitted that the group reportedly has an approximate strength of 400-500 cadres in Myanmar, including 50-75 Indian Naga cadres.

LS passes Jan Vishwas Amendment Bill 2026

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2026, by voice vote, aiming to decriminalise minor offences across various laws and further promote ease of doing business and living.

The Bill proposes to amend 784 provisions of 79 Central Acts administered by 23 Ministries. It seeks to decriminalise 717 provisions and amend 67 provisions to facilitate ease of living.

It also seeks to rationalise more than 1,000 offences, removing outdated and redundant provisions, thereby improving the overall regulatory environment. Replying to the debate on the Bill, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said it will help people and MSMEs. Amendments moved by Congress member K. Kavya were rejected by voice vote.

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(set by KrisKross)

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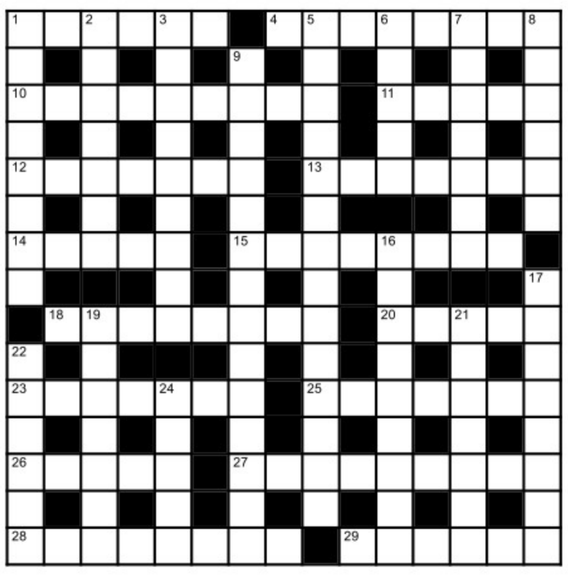
SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Collapse following blast - loud, primarily powerful (4,2)
4 Artist of Cuba, in drunken stupor, left (8)
10 Appeal to queen about monument (9)
11 Cook good fish after removing head (5)
12 Condition of sailor carried by vehicle to hospital (7)
13 Gets Mark to cycle after a time (7)
14 Rejected part of result as "Erroneous", attempted exam again (5)
15 One who loves dogs and birds (8)
18 An accountant, after retirement, trained community of scholars (8)
20 English students leaving parasol in shade (5)
23 Timid fellow gets scolding (7)
25 Close sale? (4,3)
26 Catch drum (5)
27 Hitler, say, cordial about Germany (9)
28 It provides insight from analysis of heredity (5,3)
29 Story about invading Spain - it could reveal something valuable (6)

Down

1 Maybe King's rage to quash conservative nation in revolt (4,4)
2 Shelters in grasslands not affected (4-3)
3 Mutineer punished by duke? Not fair (9)
5 I insure art, cars, refurbished trailers (7,7)
6 Easy part of this grid (5)
7 Inconsequential test - eventually one is overwhelmed by opponent (7)
8 Apparel is hand-crafted, revealing taste (6)
9 Expecting easy finals in Open Bridge Tournament, why I may fail (2,3,6,3)
16 Flattering most mature, active, conservative politician (9)
17 Picked up much more pretty traveller (8)
19 Bread ready to be dipped in tea (7)
21 Took rupees, purchased clothes (7)
22 Compensate for rotten place (6)
24 He formulated a complex argument about core of modernism (5)

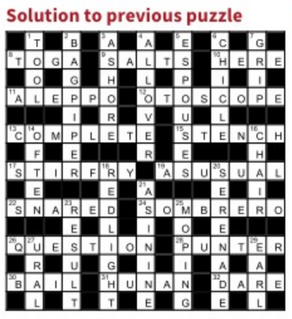
SUDOKU

3		7						
5							4	9
	9	6			8		2	
		1	2			4	9	
			4	5	6			
	4	5			1	6		
	7		8			2	5	
8	2							1
						9		3

No.SS6838 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

4	9	8	6	1	2	3	5	7
7	1	3	9	4	5	8	6	2
5	2	6	7	3	8	4	9	1
8	3	1	5	2	4	9	7	6
2	4	7	3	9	6	5	1	8
6	5	9	1	8	7	2	3	4
3	6	2	8	7	9	1	4	5
9	8	5	4	6	1	7	2	3
1	7	4	2	5	3	6	8	9

FAITH

Amazing bhakti

Nagan, chief of a band of hunters, was without progeny. His prayers were answered when a boy was born to him. Nagan named the boy Thinnan, because he was a very strong child. When Nagan became too old to continue hunting, Thinnan took charge. One day he and two other hunters – Nannan and Kadan – went chasing a boar that escaped their trap. Thinnan slew it with knife. Kadan began to cook the meat, while Thinnan and Nannan went to fetch water. Nannan suggested that they worship the deity on top of the hill. Thinnan agreed and this visit was to change his life forever, said Rama Kausalya in a lecture.

When Thinnan saw Kudumithevar, the name of Lord Siva there, his heart was filled with love. He ran back and tasted the meat, and picked the best portions for the Lord. He gathered water in his mouth to anoint the Lord and stuck some flowers in his hair to decorate the Lord with. When the priest arrived later, he was shocked to find meat. As this continued every day, the priest asked Siva to reveal who the mischief maker was. Siva decided to reveal to the world the greatness of Thinnan. When Thinnan arrived, he found blood oozing from Siva's right eye. He plucked out his eye and placed it over the bleeding eye. The bleeding stopped. But the other eye began to bleed. Thinnan was ready to pluck out his other eye to give to the Lord. But how would he know where to place it? So he marked the Lord's left eye with his foot and was about to pluck out his eye, when Lord Siva appeared before him and stopped him. He called him Kannappa, because the hunter had given Him his eye (eye – *Kann* in Tamil). In just seven days an unlettered hunter became a Nayanmar.

INBRIEF

Markets stage relief rally, rise 1.6% after a two-day rout

Benchmark stock indices rose 1.6% after a two-day rout, staging a relief rally on Wednesday. Nifty 50 was up 1.56%, closing at 22,679.40 while BSE Sensex rose 1.6% to 73,134.32. The rally was more broadbased unlike other rallies following the U.S. war with Iran with 15 of 21 sectoral Nifty indices logging positive returns and just over 500, among the 3321 traded, sliding. The rally was mostly attributed to President Trump saying the U.S. was likely to cease attacks on Iran.

NSE to introduce natural gas derivative contracts

National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE) has announced a collaboration with Indian Gas Exchange (IGX) to introduce exchange-traded derivatives based on natural gas traded and delivered on the IGX platform. This is towards strengthening India's domestic natural gas market with the aim to provide efficient risk management tools, NSE said, adding it will launch Indian natural gas derivative contracts based on IGX's benchmark Price Index GIXI.

Centre extends RoDTEP scheme by six months

The Directorate of Foreign Trade extended the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) scheme till September 30 for the benefit of exporters. In a notification, the DGFT said terms, rates and value caps applicable as on March 31, 2026 will continue till September end for all eligible exporters. The government had cut the rates for the scheme last month and restored them on March 23 for a week. Now, the scheme is extended for six months.

Despite ATF cap for local flights, fares rise as IndiGo raises levy

Amid Centre's assurance, IndiGo announced a rise in fuel surcharge by up to ₹950 for domestic flights and up to ₹10,000 for international flights

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

Hazy future: An IndiGo Airlines aircraft taxis on the tarmac on an early morning at Kolkata. REUTERS FILE

Despite the Centre stepping in to limit the impact of the aviation turbine fuel (ATF) hike by capping the rise at about 8.5% for domestic travel and assuring there would be no additional fuel-linked levy while jet fuel prices almost doubled for international and chartered flights, IndiGo raised fuel surcharge by up to ₹950 on local routes and ₹10,000 on Europe flights.

On Wednesday, ATF prices for international operations by Indian carriers and chartered flights almost doubled to ₹2,07,341.22/kilolitre from last month. But domestic air travel was relatively shielded with a modest 8.5% rise to ₹1,04,927.18 per kilolitre. Calculated on retail prices of petrol by including taxes, Petroleum Ministry Joint Secretary Sujata Sharma explained there was a 25% increase.

The announcement by oil marketing firms was followed by IndiGo raising fuel surcharge further, after reintroducing the levy last month in response to rising fuel prices.

Fuel surcharge

Instead of a flat ₹425 fuel charge for domestic passengers it announced last month, IndiGo rationalised domestic surcharges, which now range between ₹275 and ₹950 depending on distance, effectively reducing the burden on shorter routes.

In contrast, international fuel charges have seen a steep increase. Previously ranging from ₹900 to ₹2,300 per sector depending on region, the revised charges now go up to as high as ₹10,000 for long-haul routes such as Europe, reflecting the sharp rise in ATF prices for international operations. The new surcharges come into effect from April 2.

The hike in price came amid the Centre's reassurance there would not be any further airfare hike.

"The move prevents a potential industry-wide crisis," Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation Asangba Chuba said about the special intervention by the government for domestic air travel during inter-ministerial press briefing.

Mr. Chuba added, "the limited increase of 25% in ATF prices will allow airlines to offer competitive pricing avoiding the additional fuel surcharges that would have been necessary under the market linked dynamics."

However, following the West Asia crisis, airlines are already grappling with multiple challenges,including longer flight paths and war risk insurance premiums and flight cancellations.

Despite IndiGo raising fuel surcharge, airline officials are concerned about impact on demand. One official said the surcharge introduced last month already dented consumer appetite, leaving little room for any further fare increases.

The SEZ move follows an announcement to this effect in Budget 2026.

SEZ export units can sell locally at lower tax rate

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Amid weakening external demand and constrained supply routes, the Centre allowed India's export-oriented units in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) to sell products in India at concessional tax rates. The move follows announcement in the Budget 2026.

Krishan Arora, Partner and Leader of Indirect Tax and India Investment Advisory, Grant Thornton Bharat said, "This policy change guarantees our cutting edge SEZ infrastructure does not lie idle as Indian exporters navigate the dual challenges of rising international tariff barriers, geopolitical uncertainties and supply chain disruptions in the face of the war, blocking much of the trade routes."

"At the same time, domestic industry benefits by exploiting available capacity of SEZ and shall have reduced reliance on imports, which are getting both delayed and expensive owing to the war."

Import taxes lift March GST mop up to 10-month high

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The Centre's gross revenue from Goods and Services Tax (GST) rose to a 10-month high of ₹2 lakh crore in March, as per latest data. However, a deeper analysis shows the growth driven by GST on imports rather than on goods made in India.

Tax experts said this could be the result of pass-through of higher global prices and a sign of growing trade imbalance, not necessarily a sign of domestic demand strength.

The data showcases tax collections in March which reflects the economic activity in February, before the U.S.-Israel-Iran war.

Imports-driven growth

The data shows while gross GST revenue grew 8.8% in March year-on-year, gross domestic revenue climbed at a slower 5.9%. GST revenue from imports, on the other hand, grew 17.8%.

Gross GST revenue is not the amount the government gets to keep. From this amount, it has to pay refunds and only then arrive at the net revenue figure that it gets to keep. Net GST revenues grew 8.2% in March 2026, within which net domestic GST revenue grew 3.6% while net GST revenue from imports grew 23.8%.

"The composition of collections is particularly revealing... highlighting both underlying demand strength and the pass-through of higher global prices," said Manoj Mishra, Partner and Tax Controversy Management Leader at Grant Thornton Bharat.

Gross domestic revenue rose 5.9% to over ₹1.46 lakh crore.

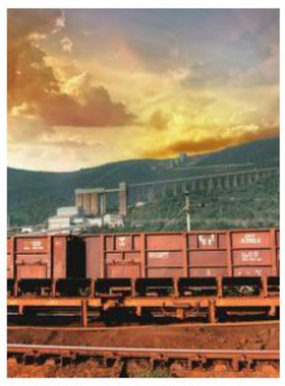
"This assumes significance at a time when the Finance Ministry has flagged early signs of moderation due to geopolitical tensions, West Asia Crisis and rising crude costs," added Mr. Mishra.

However, Mr. Mishra added the rise in collections felt less like routine year-end spike and more a signal the economy's core demand engine was intact, even as external headwinds began to surface.

Trade imbalance

Saurabh Agarwal, Tax Partner at EY India, also pointed to the "dual-speed narrative" emerging from the GST data.

"While robust collections and consistent refunds bolster the fiscal narrative, persistent rise in import GST – coupled with softening in export refunds – underscores a widening trade gap," he said.



NMDC is augmenting capacities to meet rising steel demand.

NMDC logs record iron ore output in FY26

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

India's largest iron ore producer NMDC reported record 53.15 million tonne output of the key raw material for steel in FY26. Sales touched 50.23 MT.

Production was 21% higher compared with previous fiscal's 44.07 MT, while sales rose 13% from 44.40 MT in 2024-25. Major iron ore mines - Kirandul and Bacheli in Chhattisgarh and Donimalai in Karnataka - contributed to the record output on best-ever performance.

NMDC has become the first firm in India's mining history to surpass the 50 MT annual output mark. The achievement symbolises growing strength and momentum of India's mineral sector, NMDC said.

"Crossing 50 million tonne is not just a production milestone for NMDC, it is a moment of pride for us and India's mining sector," CMD Amitava Mukherjee said.

For March, NMDC clocked 5.35 MT (3.55 MT) iron ore production and 5.90 MT (4.21 MT) sales.

NMDC said it is augmenting capacities to meet rising steel demand.

Oracle sacking 30,000 not a good sign for global tech

Mini Tejaswi
BENGALURU

New era: Oracle's total AI investments are estimated to exceed $150 billion over several years. REUTERS

Oracle Corporation's, surprise layoff of 30,000 people globally, including 12,000 in India, can't be a "one-off'' story but part of "a structural reset" across the industry, say global tech industry analysts. Oracle is an enterprise software, and database systems firm based in Texas, U.S.

Rebalancing structure

According to analysts, AI is compressing the cost of delivery, reducing the need for layers of human-led support roles and forcing firms to rebalance toward fewer, more technical, more product-oriented talent profiles. The message from the boardroom is unambiguous: AI infrastructure is the future and legacy headcount the budget. So, Larry Ellison, co-founder and long-time CEO and now Chairman and CTO of Oracle, 'is not the only guy, although he's the loudest name this week,' they said.

So far in 2026, tech firms cut over 85,000 jobs, that's nearly 1,000 people every day. Amazon cut 16,000 in January alone; IBM shed about 9,000 in 2025 and is on course to match that in 2026; Salesforce slashed half its customer support team and replaced it with AI agents. LinkedIn data shows AI/ML engineering job postings rose 34% year-over-year in March, even as overall tech postings fell 8%.

The pattern couldn't be clearer: companies are cutting non-AI roles to fund AI roles. The panic triggered by TCS in October last year, when it slashed 12,000 jobs is only likely to get more prominent now on with multiple factors simultaneously adding pressure on technology, they cautioned.

Avinash Vashistha, Chairman & CEO, Tholons, a tech advisory and research firm based in New York and also former Chairman & CEO, Accenture India, observed, "The irony is, this is not a company (Oracle) in revenue distress. It is a company placing a very large bet. And the chips it's cashing in are people."

Doubles net income

For instance, Oracle posted a 95% jump in net income last quarter, reaching $6.13 billion and its balance performance obligations - a measure of contracted future revenue - stood at $523 billion, up 433% year over year.

Mr. Vashistha said, "I advise boards and CEOs across the world's largest technology and GCC organisations and the question I am asked most is: how do we transform our workforce for AI? My answer is increasingly uncomfortable - you cannot retrofit an AI-first culture onto a legacy workforce at the speed the market demands. The smarter play is to go upstream: embed your organisation inside universities, capture talent in final semester, and build AI-native teams from the ground up."

According to Peter Bendor-Samuel, Founder and Executive Chairman of Dallas-based Everest Group, Oracle layoffs are linked to AI but not to the AI productivity in coding.

"Oracle has made huge commitments to build AI data centres and now is restructuring to save money and potentially divest assets so it can free up the cash to build them," he said. The Everest Group Chief was of the opinion that the Oracle layoffs were a story of restructuring and resulted from over expansion during COVID.

Math of the machine

Oracle's total AI investments are estimated to cross $150 billion over many years, including a $50 billion debt to support infrastructure expansion tied to Stargate data centre project with OpenAI.

"To fund bricks, servers and GPUs, it needs to shed salaries,'' Mr. Vashistha said. Investment banker TD Cowen estimates workforce cuts will free up $8-10 billion in cash flow even as Oracle disclosed $2.1 billion restructuring plan in its March 2026 SEC filing.

Tailwinds push FY26 PV sales growth 8%; Maruti to hike prices as costs rise

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

India's passenger vehicles (PV) industry with sales of about 47 lakh units in FY26 grew over 8% year-on-year, as per data collated by Maruti Suzuki India Ltd.

Almost all PV firms reported double-digit growth, mainly on higher sales during the second half of the financial year.

"Three tailwinds helped the industry during FY26. These included the income tax relief provided by the government which left more money in the hands of people so that they could give down payment, the 100 basis points repo rate cut by the RBI that helped in lower EMI and GST 2.0 that reduced prices of cars. All these three factors were the catalyst," said Partho Banerjee, senior executive officer, marketing & sales, Maruti Suzuki. He said the only challenge currently is the rise in input cost.

IT cuts, GST 2.0 and RBI's repo rate cuts boosted sales in FY26.

Maruti, he said, has been absorbing the cost for months and now, will soon increase prices of its models as cost has risen due to an increase in commodity prices, as well as a rise in logistics cost due to the war in West Asia. Rahul Bharti, senior executive officer, corporate affairs, said as of now there was no supply chain issue on war.

War to hit sales

Due to the impact of geopolitical issues, the PV industry growth will be a bit lower in FY27 and is expected to be about 5%, industry officials said.

Maruti Suzuki for March logged total sales of over 2.2 lakh units up 16.7%. Mr. Bharti said "we are buoyant on exports in FY27."

In FY26 Maruti Suzuki reported total sales of 24.2 lakh units, up 8.5%. Hyundai Motor India Ltd. achieved total Q4 FY26 sales of 2,08,275 units, up by 8.7%.

Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd. clocked sales of 6.42 lakh units in FY26, up 15%. Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. said overall auto sales for March stood at 99,969 vehicles, up 21%.

Toyota Kirloskar Motor said in FY26 it sold 4,06,081 units, up 20%. Škoda Auto India, in FY26 sold 75,555 units compared with 44,869 units a year ago, up 68%.

Renault India for March reported 77% growth selling 5,046 units.

JODHPUR VIDYUT VITARAN NIGAM LIMITED
(MATERIAL MANAGEMENT & CONTRACT WING) NEW POWER HOUSE,
INDUSTRIAL AREA, JODHPUR-342003 PHONE: (0291) 2742223, FAX: (0291) 2746539

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

E-Procurement Tender is invited for Rate contract for Repair & Testing of Damaged Three Phase Distribution Transformers of assorted ratings under TN-2134 (UBN JVV2526GLRC01008).

Details regarding Quantity, Tender cost, Earnest Money, Schedule date of tender opening for aforesaid tenders are available on our website at **energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jdvvnl** and also at **http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in.**

Raj.Samwad/C/26/78 SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (MM&C)

बिजली संबंधी शिकायतों के लिए टोल फ्री नम्बर 1800 180 6045

State Infrastructure & Industrial Development Corporation of Uttarakhand LTD.
29, IIE, Sahastradhara Road (IT Park), Dehradun
Phone No. 0135-2607292, 2708100, Web site: www.siidcul.com

E-Tender Notice

SIIDCUL invites online bids from interested bidders for selection of agency for cleaning, sanitation & maintenance of roads, drains and green areas in SIIDCUL IT PARK, IIE Sahastradhara Road, Dehradun, as per details described in the respective bid documents. The bidders must furnish complete information as per the procedure laid down in the respective bid document.Detailed bid document can be downloaded from **www.siidcul.com** & **www.uktenders.gov.in** between **02.04.2026 to 17.04.2026**. Further any corrigendum regarding the bid shall be published in above websites **www.siidcul.com** &/or **www.uktenders.gov.in** only. Interested bidders can however submit the complete bid document on e-tender website **https://uktenders.gov.in** only on or before the due dates as mentioned in the bid documents respectively.

Name of IIE and BID Notice	AREA	NIT No.
Selection of agency for cleaning, sanitation & maintenance of roads, drains and green areas in SIIDCUL IT PARK, IIE Sahastradhara Road, Dehradun	IIE (IT PARK)	213/SIIDCUL/2026

REGIONAL MANAGER

APPOINTMENT

ICMR-NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NUTRITION
INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH
Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India
Jamai Osmania Post, Tarnaka, Hyderabad - 500 007, Telangana State, India.
No. NIN/Estt-1/YPs/2026/ Date: 02-04-2026

VACANCY NOTIFICATION FOR ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANTS AND YOUNG PROFESSIONALS (CONTRACTUAL BASIS)

ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad functioning under the aegis of Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, GOI invites applications in the prescribed format to engage following Consultants and Young Professionals (YPs) purely on contractual basis for short term support in the activities of the institute.

Sl. No.	Name of the position	No. of vacancies
1.	Consultant (Information Technology)	1
2.	Consultant (Scientific / Technical - Non-Medical)	1
3.	Young Professional-II (Admin)	1
4.	Young Professional-II (Legal)	1
5.	Young Professional-II (Finance & Accounts)	1
6.	Young Professional-II (Information Technology)	1

The detailed Notification is published on ICMR and ICMR-NIN website (**www.nin.res.in**). The last date of receipt of application is **15-04-2026.** Sd/-
टिप्पणी: इस अधिसूचना के हिंदी संस्करण के लिए कृपया ICMR-NIN वेबसाइट पर जाएं। DIRECTOR

MALABAR CANCER CENTRE
(POST GRADUATE INSTITUTE OF ONCOLOGY SCIENCES & RESEARCH)
NABH & NABL Accredited (an autonomous Institution under Government of Kerala
Thalassery, Kannur, Kerala - 670 103,Phone :+91 490 2399207, 2355881
Fax: 91 490 2355880,Email: mcctly@gmail.com, Web: www.mcc.kerala.gov.in
E816522/MCC/82/2026-E2-GAD/1 31/03/2026

DATE EXTENSION CORRIGENDUM

Notification No. E816522/MCC/82/2026-E2-GAD/1 dated 10.03.2026
With reference to notification cited above, online applications were invited for the post of Scientific Officer (Nuclear Medicine) and Biomedical Engineer in MCC (PGIOSR) on Permanent Basis. The last date for submission of online applications, which was originally fixed as 09.04.2026, has been extended upto 30.04.2026. All other terms and conditions mentioned in the original notification remain unchanged.
Details are available in mcc.kerala.gov.in/www.mcconline.in Sd/- Director

MOSCOW

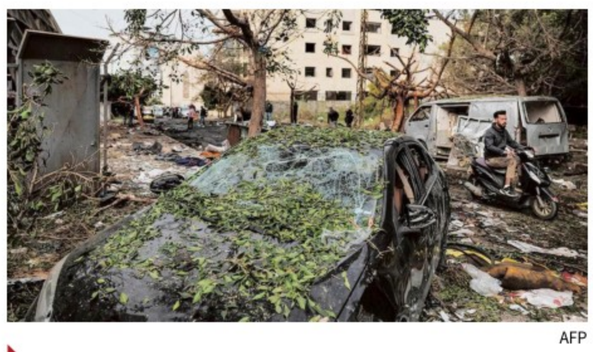
Russian plane crash in Crimea due to 'technical snag' kills 29 people

REUTERS

A Russian military plane crash in annexed Crimea has killed six crew and 23 passengers, Russian news agencies reported in the early hours of Wednesday, citing the Defence Ministry. The Interfax news agency cited the Defence Ministry as saying a suspected technical malfunction may have caused the crash. AP

BEIRUT

Israeli strikes on Beirut area kill 7, hurts 21: Lebanon's Health Ministry



AFP

Lebanon's Health Ministry said on Wednesday that Israeli strikes on Beirut's southern suburbs and a nearby town killed at least seven persons and wounded 21 others, as Israel's military said it had targeted senior Hezbollah members. The state-run National News Agency (NNA) said one of the strikes originated from a warship. AFP

BNEI BRAK

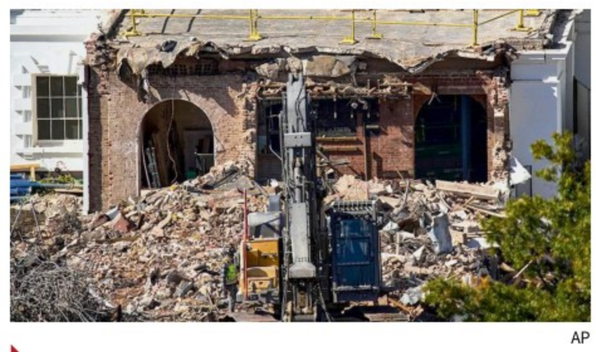
Israel medics say 14 wounded in missile fire military blames on Iran

AFP

Israel's emergency medical service said 14 people including an 11-year-old girl were wounded during a missile attack that the military blamed on Iran, and police said caused damage at several sites. Iran has claimed it targets military objectives. Israeli media said cluster munitions were used in the latest attack. AFP

WASHINGTON

Judge orders halt in White House's $400 mn ballroom construction



AP

A federal judge on Tuesday ordered the Trump administration to suspend construction of a $400 million ballroom it demolished the East Wing of the White House to make space for, barring work from proceeding without congressional approval. The White House quickly filed a notice to appeal while Trump fumed at the ruling. AP

U.K. can lead Hormuz opening, says Starmer, as transatlantic ties fray

A group of 35 nations would assess all diplomatic and political methods available to ensure safe passage of ships and personnel via the Strait of Hormuz, says British PM; he reiterated U.K.'s position of staying out of the U.S.-Israel war on Iran

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the U.K. was willing to play a lead role in getting the Strait of Hormuz open again as he announced a meeting of Foreign Ministers later this week to address this. Acknowledging the pressure on him from U.S. President Donald Trump, Mr. Starmer said he would not join the U.S. and Israel's war on Iran, as he backed stronger relationships between the U.K. and European countries.

"We're prepared to take a sort of leadership role in that as the United Kingdom in relation to the Strait of Hormuz," Mr. Starmer said at a press conference on Wednesday morning.

A group of around 35 nations, Mr. Starmer said on Wednesday, would assess all diplomatic and political methods available to ensure safe passage of ships and personnel via the Strait of Hormuz and to restore the transport of commodities via that route.

Following this, the group's military planners will be convened to look into to how to make the Strait safe and accessible once the fighting has stopped.

The Hindu understands the virtual meeting will take place on Thursday and include a number of European nations, as well as Japan, Australia, the UAE, and Bahrain.

Clear stance: Keir Starmer speaks during a press conference at 10 Downing Street in London on Wednesday. AFP

On Tuesday, Mr. Trump repeatedly took issue with European allies, specifically the U.K. and France, for not joining the war and told them to "go get your own oil" from the Strait.

The U.K. was "fully committed" to the West's military alliance, NATO, Mr. Starmer said, when questioned about Mr. Trump's threats to pull the U.S. out of the alliance. The British Prime Minister nevertheless reiterated the U.K.'s position of staying out of the U.S.-Israel war on Iran.

"This is not our war. We will not be drawn into the conflict that is not in our national interest," Mr. Starmer said. He reiterated acting in his nation's interest "whatever the pressure on me and others, whatever the noise", referring to comments from Mr. Trump.

The U.K. needed a stronger relationship with the rest of Europe on security and defence, the economy and energy emissions, Mr. Starmer said.

Trump says Iran sought ceasefire, Tehran denies

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that Iran asked for a ceasefire and he would consider it once the Strait of Hormuz is open. Tehran said it has not made any ceasefire proposal.

"Iran's New Regime President, much less Radicalized and far more intelligent than his predecessors, has just asked the United States of America for a ceasefire! We will consider when Hormuz Strait is open, free, and clear. Until then, we are blasting Iran into oblivion or, as they say, back to the Stone Ages," Mr. Trump wrote in a social media post, a day after saying reopening Hormuz was the responsibility of other nations.

Donald Trump

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said the country has not made any ceasefire proposal and will continue the war "until the aggressor is punished and full compensation is paid," state media reported.

'Paper tiger'

Earlier, Mr. Trump said in an interview that he was considering exiting the NATO, citing that no NATO country came to America's help in the war on Iran.

"Oh yes, I would say [it's] beyond reconsideration [pulling out of NATO]. I was never swayed by NATO. I always knew they were a paper tiger, and Putin knows that too, by the way," Mr. Trump told British daily *The Telegraph*.

Mr. Trump said it was "hard to believe" that NATO did not answer his call to join the war.

"Beyond not being there, it was actually hard to believe. And I didn't do a big sale. I just said, 'Hey', you know, I didn't insist too much. I just think it should be automatic. We've been there automatically, including Ukraine. Ukraine wasn't our problem. It was a test, and we were there for them, and we would always have been there for them. They weren't there for us," he said.

NASA begins fuelling rocket for first lunar trip in 50 years

Associated Press
CAPE CANAVERAL

NASA began fuelling its moon rocket on Wednesday for humanity's first lunar trip in more than half a century, aiming for an evening lift-off with four astronauts.

Tensions were high as hydrogen fuel started flowing into the rocket hours ahead of the planned launch. Dangerous hydrogen leaks erupted during a countdown test earlier this year, forcing a lengthy flight delay.

The launch team needs to load more than 2.6 million litres into the 32-story Space Launch System rocket on the pad before the *Artemis II* crew can board.

"It is time to fly," commander Reid Wiseman said on the eve of launch via X. Favourable weather was forecast.

People set cameras to photograph NASA's *Artemis II* lunar flyby mission ahead of its launch at the Kennedy Space Center. REUTERS

Three Americans and one Canadian will fly around the moon without stopping or even orbiting – then head straight back for a Pacific splashdown. They will set a new distance record for the farthest humans have travelled from Earth as they zoom some 6,400 km beyond the moon and then hang a U-turn.

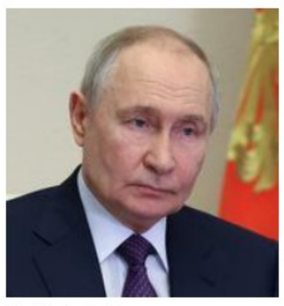
Astronauts last flew to the moon during *Apollo 17* in 1972.

Putin likely to participate in BRICS summit in Delhi, says Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO

Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to participate in the BRICS summit scheduled in September in India, Deputy Foreign Minister Rudenko Andrey Yurevich said in Colombo on Wednesday, adding that Moscow would support New Delhi's efforts to forge a consensus among members. Further, Russia will honour all existing contracts on oil, he said, following Russia's decision to ban export of gasoline with effect from April 1, owing to price fluctuations.

"My President has an invitation from Prime Minister Modi to come to New Delhi, and for the time being, we don't see any problems which would prevent him from doing so," he said, while commending India, as BRICS chair, for "doing its best to streamline differences". "We need to see what will happen by the time of the summit itself. But so far, we consider this invitation with seriousness," Mr. Rudenko said, citing the "volatile situation" in West Asia. He was addressing the media in an interaction organised by the Colombo-based think tank Pathfinder Foundation. Mr. Rudenko's official visit comes barely a week after Russian Deputy Minister for Energy Roman Marshavin was in Sri Lanka, pledging Moscow's support to Colombo



Vladimir Putin

to cope with the energy crisis stemming from the conflict in West Asia.

Commenting on the challenges in building consensus within the 10-nation grouping – which also includes Iran and the United Arab Emirates – the visiting Russian official described BRICS as an entity that brings together countries with different policies and national priorities. "And while they chose to join it, they want these priorities coordinated in a more systematic way to better protect their interests worldwide. But their national policies sometimes differ radically," he said.

'Growing wedge'

Further, terming the grouping "quite a flexible organisation" that allows each member state to retain "its own voice", he added that building consensus is difficult when members are "on different sides of the frontline". "One of the great consequences of the conflict is the growing wedge between Iran and its Arab neighbours," he said. Last month, India sent invitations to all member states for the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in May and the 18th BRICS Summit scheduled to be held in New Delhi in September.

Meanwhile, Russia will implement all past contracts on oil exports, he said, when asked about the impact of Moscow's decision to ban gasoline exports. "To tell you frankly, Russia's natural resources are not also unlimited...but we will do our best," he said, adding that the sooner the conflict in West Asia ends, "the better for everyone". India's Russian oil imports soared to a nine-month high in March 2026.

As American bombs fall on Iran, South American nations brace for impact

NEWS ANALYSIS

Shobhan Saxena
SAO PAULO

American bombs are tearing apart buildings and lives in Iran, but the shockwaves of those attacks are being felt in parts of Latin America as they trigger old memories and new fears. Even as U.S. President Donald Trump blows hot and cold on Iran, he has begun to speak of Cuba with growing frequency and menace. "I built this great Army. I said, 'You will never need to use it.' But sometimes you have to use it. And Cuba is next, by the way," Mr. Trump told a meeting of investors on March 27 in Miami – a city known for its Cuban community and their opposition towards Havana. "But pretend I didn't say that," added Mr. Trump as he heaped praise on himself for the military campaigns against Iran and Venezuela to a raucous crowd.

The kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro still hangs over Latin America as countries fear getting sucked into Mr. Trump's so-called war on narco-terrorism. Air strikes are already being conducted on the Ecuador-Colombia border as Ecuadorian military carries out a joint operation with American forces. Called "Operation Total Extermination", the campaign is officially "setting the pace for regional, deterrence-focused operations against cartel infrastructure throughout Latin America", but poor farmers accuse the government of targeting their land and livestock. The country's right-wing President Daniel Noboa has declared an "internal armed conflict" – in line with Mr. Trump's rhetoric.

Before Mr. Trump sent his forces to Venezuela, Washington had branded certain criminal groups as terrorist organisations and named Mr. Maduro as their head. A similar script now appears to be written for other countries. The *New York Times* reported last week that the U.S. is "considering classifying Brazil's two criminal factions – Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC) and Comando Vermelho (CV) – as terrorist groups".

Donald Trump stands with the region's pro-Washington leaders at the 'Shield of the Americas' Summit in Miami on March 7. AFP

Generally, groups placed on the American list of terrorist organisations face financial sanctions, but in Venezuela's case, it was used for a military attack. The possibility is causing unease in Brazil. Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira recently told his U.S. counterpart, Marco Rubio, that Brasília opposes classifying PCC and CV as terrorist organisations.

In the case of Colombia, the situation is serious. President Gustavo Petro is reportedly being investigated by U.S. prosecutors to find out if he "met with drug traffickers and solicited donations for his 2022 presidential campaign". Mr. Petro has blamed the country's right-wing Opposition for fabricating the story ahead of the presidential elections in May.

As both Colombia and Brazil go to elections this year, their leaders are speaking up against the danger. At last week's Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States in Bogotá, President Lula da Silva of Brazil criticised the growing U.S. "colonialist policies towards" Latin America.

As leaders like Mr. Petro and Lula challenge Mr. Trump, his administration appears to be trying to isolate them. On March 7, Mr. Trump hosted the region's pro-Washington leaders for a conference – called the "Shield of the Americas" – where they discussed how to "enlist and expand" partnerships for joint counter-drug operations in the region. At the meeting in Florida, which didn't include Brazil, Mexico, Chile, and Colombia, all run by leftist governments, Mr. Trump alleged that "drug cartels are running Mexico". The meeting's tone, where only Americans spoke and everybody else listened, has set the alarm bells ringing in several countries. "Maduro's kidnapping was a warning. The war on Iran is another warning to us to fall in line. The Shield of the Americas meeting is a clear sign that the Americans want to go after the regions' natural resources, especially rare earths, and curb our relations with China," says a senior Brazilian official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Mr. Trump's close ties with Argentina's chainsaw-wielding President Javier Milei are well known. Now, the U.S. President appears to be widening his reach. His latest catch is Chile's new President, José Antonio Kast, who attended the Florida meeting even before being sworn in. Mr. Kast's inauguration on March 10 offered a glimpse of rising tensions. Lula, who was expected to attend, pulled out at the last minute after Mr. Kast invited Brazil's far-right politician Flávio Bolsonaro, a likely challenger to the President in October elections. *(Shobhan Saxena is a Sao Paulo-based journalist)*

OPTIMISTIC

I do not want to jinx anything, says Shreyas on hand injury

SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer is optimistic about quickly recovering from the hand injury he suffered in the IPL clash against Gujarat Titans. "All I can say is that it [the hand] is nice. It is the same as before [said with a smile]. I do not want to jinx anything; I just want to stay positive. Hopefully, everything comes out right".

PROPER ATHLETE

We are quite excited about Ashok: Titans assistant coach Parthiv

AP

He has pace; he also has character. He went for runs in his first two overs, but he came in and bowled the crucial 18th over. He is a proper athlete, so we are quite excited about him — Gujarat Titans assistant coach Parthiv Patel on Ashok Sharma's IPL debut against Punjab Kings.

PENALTY

PBKS skipper Shreyas fined ₹12 lakh for slow over-rate in GT match

SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Punjab Kings skipper Shreyas Iyer was fined ₹12 lakh after his team maintained a slow over-rate during the tense win over Gujarat Titans in New Chandigarh. Shreyas was penalised under Article 2.22 of IPL's code of conduct. "This was the team's first offence of the season," the IPL said in a statement.

BIG BOOST

Dhoni makes an appearance during CSK's practice session

FILE PHOTO: B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Chennai Super Kings' M.S. Dhoni, who is recovering from a calf strain that had originally ruled him out of the IPL for two weeks, was seen training at the MAC Stadium in Chennai on Wednesday. The footage of the 44-year-old in action was shared by the host broadcaster and on CSK's social media platforms.

'Local boy' Rizvi takes Capitals home

His unbroken century stand with Stubbs helps the team overcome a stutter in the PowerPlay; the wily Ngidi and Natarajan shoot out LSG for 141

IPL-19

Dhruva Prasad
LUCKNOW

Miss and hit: Pooran couldn't rise to the occasion while Rizvi sparkled for Capitals. R.V. MOORTHY

It took the Uttar Pradesh-born Sameer Rizvi's familiarity with the conditions at the Ekana Cricket Stadium for Delhi Capitals to tide over an early crisis and post a six-wicket win against Lucknow Super Giants in their Indian Premier League opener here on Wednesday.

Rizvi got off the mark with a hurried single off his ninth ball. The Capitals had lost four wickets in the PowerPlay, and a 142-run target didn't warrant recklessness. In an era of frenetic hitting, the 22-year-old Rizvi displayed maturity. He betrayed his Gen Z traits only in the eighth over when he ramped the pacy Anrich Nortje for a six over third-man.

Rizvi showed game awareness when he took on Shahbaz Ahmed and Aiden Markram, the weak links in the host's lineup. He laid into Shahbaz's first over with three fours and pillaged a four and a six off Markram to raise a 37-ball half-century. With 36 runs needed at run-a-ball, Tristan Stubbs and Rizvi completed the formality.

But the pace trio of Mohammed Shami, Prince Yadav and Mohsin Khan gave the Capitals a mighty scare in the PowerPlay. While Shami got the crowd roaring with the first-ball wicket of KL Rahul, Mohsin removed Nitish Rana soon after.

Prince, with his consistent pace and accuracy, was the silver lining of Super Giants' defeat. He nabbed Pathum Nissanka with a length ball and cleaned up Axar Patel with a menacing in-swinger that zipped off the surface.

Earlier, Super Giants tried to fix something that wasn't broken and paid the price immediately, with the star quartet of Rishabh Pant, Markram, Nicholas Pooran and Mitchell Marsh back in the dugout by the 10th over.

After the Capitals opted to bowl on a red-soil surface, Pant, opening only for the sixth time in his IPL career, started with a sumptuous on-drive. But before the skipper could justify his self-promotion, his partner Marsh's straight drive left Pant stranded at the non-striker's end. Marsh and Markram, an explosive opening pair last season, joined forces for a brisk 29-run stand before the spin pair of Axar and Kuldeep Yadav outfoxed them.

Abdul Samad kept the host afloat with a 25-ball 36, but T. Natarajan and Lungi Ngidi's variations eventually sank the host.

Go-to man: Ngidi was more than a handful for LSG. R.V. MOORTHY

SCOREBOARD

LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS
Mitchell Marsh c Stubbs b Kuldeep 35 *(28b, 2x4, 3x6)*, Rishabh Pant run out 7 *(9b, 1x4)*, Aiden Markram b Axar 11 *(8b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Ayush Badoni c Rahul b Natarajan 0 *(3b)*, Nicholas Pooran b Ngidi 8 *(8b, 1x4)*, Abdul Samad c Miller b Natarajan 36 *(25b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Mukul Choudhary c & b Kuldeep 14 *(11b, 2x4)*, Shahbaz Ahmed **(Impact Player for Marsh)** (not out) 15 *(16b, 1x4)*, Mohammed Shami c Kuldeep b Natarajan 1 *(2b)*, Anrich Nortje c Stubbs b Ngidi 0 *(1b)*, Mohsin Khan c Mukesh b Ngidi 0 *(1b)*; Extras (b-4, lb-8, w-2): 14; Total (in 18.4 overs): 141.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-19 (Pant, 2.6 overs), 2-48 (Markram, 5.5), 3-49 (Badoni, 6.3), 4-65 (Pooran, 8.5), 5-71 (Marsh, 9.3), 6-105 (Mukul, 13.1), 7-138 (Samad, 17.3), 8-140 (Shami, 17.6), 9-141 (Nortje, 18.3).

CAPITALS BOWLING
Mukesh 3-0-17-0, Ngidi 3.4-0-27-3, Axar 3-0-17-1, Natarajan 4-0-29-3, Kuldeep 4-0-31-2, Vipraj 1-0-8-0.

DELHI CAPITALS
K.L. Rahul c Mohsin b Shami 0 *(1b)*, Pathum Nissanka c Pant b Prince 1 *(5b)*, Nitish Rana c Samad b Mohsin 15 *(17b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Sameer Rizvi **(Impact Player for Natarajan)** (not out) 70 *(47b, 5x4, 4x6)*, Axar Patel b Prince 0 *(1b)*, Tristan Stubbs (not out) 39 *(32b, 3x4, 1x6)*; Extras (lb-4, w-16): 20; Total (for four wkts. in 17.1 overs): 145.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-0 (Rahul, 0.1), 2-21 (Nitish, 3.3), 3-25 (Nissanka, 4.2), 4-26 (Axar, 4.3).

SUPER GIANTS BOWLING
Shami 4-0-28-1, Prince 3-0-20-2, Mohsin 4-1-19-1, Nortje 4-0-39-0, Shahbaz 1-0-16-0, Markram 1-0-13-0, Samad 0.1-0-6-0.

Toss: Capitals; **PoM:** Rizvi.
Capitals won by six wickets with 17 balls to spare.

Next assignment

DC: April 4 vs. **MI**
Delhi, 3.30 p.m.

LSG: April 5 vs. **SRH**
Hyderabad, 3.30 p.m.

Sealed with a six!

Shot heard around the world! Fifteen years ago on this date in Mumbai, Dhoni sent millions of fans into raptures by leading from the front to help India beat Sri Lanka and claim its second World Cup to end a 28-year-old wait. FILE PHOTO: K.R. DEEPAK

IPL is probably tougher than international cricket: Muzarabani

Y.B. Sarangi
KOLKATA

Muzarabani. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Guided by Kolkata Knight Riders mentor Dwayne Bravo, Zimbabwean pacer Blessing Muzarabani believes that his Indian Premier League exposure will make him a better bowler.

The 6'8" tall speedster acknowledged Bravo's help. "He has already told me a lot of things. Ever since I started playing, he has already given me a lot of information about my bowling. He told me the kind of skills I need, especially in T20 - how to practice and how to watch T20 cricket. I believe that at the end of the season, I'm going to be a different bowler," said Muzarabani - whose uncle Taurai is also a pacer for Zimbabwe - responding to a query from *The Hindu*. Following the exit of Bangladesh seamer Mustafizur Rahman, KKR got in touch with the 29-year-old Muzarabani, who impressed everyone in the T20 World Cup (13 wickets), around Zimbabwe's match against India in the global event.

Having warmed the bench in Royal Challengers Bengaluru colours after being roped in as a temporary replacement for Lungi Ngidi last season, Muzarabani is keen to play as much as possible.

"I want to play and perform. I just want to be here. I believe I am good enough. I was really happy to be in the RCB team and get to see how the game is played. I believe that IPL is probably tougher than international cricket. So, being in RCB last year, I really saw how it's played. This year, it's just me adjusting."

Muzarabani loves the friendly atmosphere in the KKR team and the company of his pace colleagues. "The guys are so hard-working. I'm a hard worker as well, but I'm really challenged with the guys, the way they work hard and how hungry they are to succeed. They're really pushing me," said Muzarabani.

Big hits from KKR, SRH on the cards

Y.B. Sarangi
KOLKATA

Exciting talent: Raghuvanshi has the shots to propel Knight Riders to big totals. K.R. DEEPAK

Today's match

Kolkata, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 30
KKR 20 | SRH 10

PREVIOUS MEETING
SRH won by 110 runs, 2025

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 & JIOHOTSTAR

With similar backstories, Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) and Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) would look to open their account in their Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 meeting at the Eden Gardens here on Thursday.

Both the teams' batting has emerged stronger than their bowling. KKR and SRH lost their season openers, to Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bengaluru respectively, despite scoring 200-plus totals. Here, in their second outing, the main challenge for the sides would be to strike a balance between the two key departments.

KKR will be excited for its opening home engagement.

The success of multiple batters, including captain Ajinkya Rahane, Finn Allen, Angkrish Raghuvanshi and Rinku Singh, against MI should inspire confidence. An eye-catching contribution from its costliest import, Australian Cameron Green, will make the host happier.

The KKR bowlers, who recorded double digit economies against MI, need to be parsimonious on another small ground. As Green's unavailability due to a niggle restricts Rahane's options, the KKR skipper will hope that others, especially experienced spinners Sunil Narine and Varun Chakaravarthy, rise to the occasion.

SRH will rely on its awe-inspiring firepower in batting. Even though Ishan Kishan, Aniket Verma and Heinrich Klaasen made noticeable contributions against RCB, the tourists would like to see their destructive openers Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head live up to their billing.

Apart from David Payne, who took two wickets against RCB, SRH will expect its experienced Indian seamers Harshal Patel and Jaydev Unadkat to be more effective.

Nevertheless, SRH would struggle to find replacements for skipper Pat Cummins, who is travelling with the squad even without playing, and Englishman Brydon Carse.

Known for staging high-scoring duels, the Eden track, sporting a tinge of green following some rains in recent past, may please the run-hungry batters and eagerly-awaiting fans alike.

Nayar bets on Varun bouncing back

Y.B. Sarangi
KOLKATA

Varun. K.R. DEEPAK

Kolkata Knight Riders head coach Abhishek Nayar on Wednesday expressed confidence that spinner Varun Chakaravarthy would bounce back in the IPL.

Varun conceded a lot of runs in the T20 World Cup and in KKR's IPL opener against Mumbai Indians (0/48 in four overs) at the Wankhede Stadium the other night.

However, Nayar solidly backed the spinner. "He has gone through a lot more than this. He has accomplished a lot over the past year, which has increased expectations...Statistically, he's pretty much bowled the similar speeds that he always has.

"Hawkeye suggests he has bowled the same lengths, but sometimes players play you better," Nayar said on the eve of KKR's match against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

"It (Wankhede) was a pitch that challenged all spinners... and Varun bowls (in) those phases where he's always going to be challenged. As a franchise, as support staff, we back him. Teams are playing him well. Doesn't mean he can't come back. It just means that it's another challenge in his life.

"At times you want to protect a bowler and bring him at a time where you feel he can be more effective. But the nature of the game is (such) that sometimes you want to put your best players in a position to perform. If he picks up wickets there, he's a different bowler."

INBRIEF

Shruthi, Aarav claim junior National 9-ball pool crowns

Tamil Nadu's L. Shruthi dethroned Karnataka's Natasha Chethan 6-4 to claim the junior girls' 9-ball pool National title on debut in Ludhiana on Tuesday. The 18-year-old from Coimbatore had won the junior snooker title in January. In the junior boys' event, Maharashtra's Aarav Sancheti outplayed Karnataka's Laksh Sharma 7-3 in the title clash.

India to tour Zimbabwe for three T20Is

India will tour Zimbabwe for three T20Is in July, the country's cricket board said on Wednesday. The matches will all be played in Harare – on July 23, 25 and 26 – before the teams meet again in January next year for three ODI matches in India. India last toured Zimbabwe in 2024, winning a five-match T20 series 4-1.

Vishvanath and Sachin in Asian boxing quarterfinals

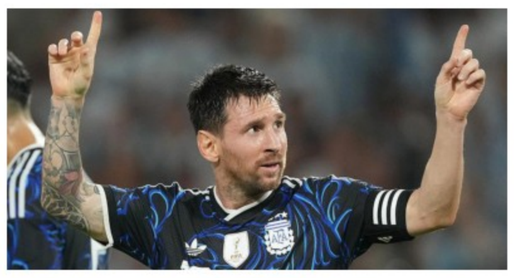
Former World youth champions Vishvanath Suresh (50kg) and Sachin Siwach (60kg) won their respective bouts to move into the quarterfinals of the Asian boxing championships in Ulaanbaatar on Wednesday. Vishvanath relied on his ring craft to get past Kyrgyzstan's Bekzat Ergeshov 5-0 and set up a last-eight clash with Kazakhstan's reigning World champion Sanzhar Tashkenbay. Second-seeded Sachin earned a 4-1 win over Mongolia's Buyandalai Bayarkhuu and will meet Chinese Taipei's Cheng-Wei Lee next.

Tottenham signs De Zerbi as its new manager

Roberto De Zerbi has been appointed as manager of Tottenham Hotspur, the club announced Tuesday, in a bid to help the London side avoid relegation from the Premier League. "We are pleased to announce the appointment of Roberto De Zerbi as our new men's head coach on a long-term contract, subject to work permit," said a club statement. De Zerbi added: "I am delighted to be joining this fantastic club."

Woods to step away from golf, to seek treatment

Tiger Woods said on Tuesday that he is stepping away from golf to seek treatment, days after his vehicle crashed in Florida. "This is necessary in order for me to prioritise my well-being and work toward lasting recovery," Woods said.



Messi scores once, provides an assist in Argentina's win

Lionel Messi scored a goal and provided an assist in what was likely his final home appearance for Argentina's national squad in a 5-0 rout of Zambia on Tuesday in a farewell friendly in Buenos Aires. The 38-year-old set up Julian Alvarez in the fourth minute and then scored in the 43rd – his 116th international goal in 198 appearances for Argentina. The crowd gave him a standing ovation and pleaded with him to help Argentina win another World Cup. Nicolas Otamendi and Valentin Barco also scored.

LIVE TELECAST

IFL: Sony Sports Ten 5 & LIV, 4 & 6.30 p.m.
IPL: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.

Italy's nightmare continues with another capitulation, this time to Bosnia

Turkiye, Czechia, Sweden, Iraq and DR Congo complete the list of teams that have made the grade for the marquee event in North America

Joy and despair: Bosnian players celebrate as the Italians cut a sorry picture after the penalty shootout. REUTERS & AP

WC QUALIFIERS

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

Italy failed to qualify for a third consecutive World Cup as a play-off defeat on penalties to Bosnia and Hercegovina on Tuesday meant the Azzurri will not go to this year's tournament in North America, while Turkiye, the Czech Republic and Sweden all secured their places at the finals.

Italy has won the World Cup four times, but failed to qualify for the 2018 and 2022 tournaments and will once again have to watch from afar as the field is expanded to 48 teams in the USA, Canada and Mexico.

Bosnia won 4-1 in the shoot-out in Zenica after their play-off final finished 1-1 at the end of extra time, with Sandro Tonali the only Italy player to score from the spot.

Francesco Pio Esposito blazed the first penalty over and Bryan Cristante smashed his kick against the crossbar.

Moise Kean had given Gennaro Gattuso's Italy the lead on 15 minutes, but they were reduced to 10 men when Alessandro Bastoni was shown a straight red card late in the first half. Bosnia equalised on 79 minutes through Haris Tabakovic, and with no further goals in extra time the tie was decided on penalties.

Turkiye qualified as Kerem Akturkoglu's 53rd-minute goal secured a 1-0 win in Kosovo.

It will be Turkiye's first appearance at a World Cup since reaching the semi-finals in 2002.

Sweden recovered from a desperate performance in the group stage of qualifying to secure its place in dramatic fashion.

It edged Poland 3-2 in Stockholm, with Arsenal's Viktor Gyokeres scoring an 88th-minute winner.

Iraq became the 48th and final team to qualify with a nerve-shredding 2-1 win over Bolivia in an inter-continental playoff in Mexico on Tuesday.

The results (aet denotes after extra time): Bosnia 1 (Tabakovic 79) drew with Italy 1 (Kean 15) aet (Bosnia win 4-1 on penalties).
Sweden 3 (Elanga 20, Lagerbielke 44, Gyokeres 88) bt Poland 2 (Zalewski 33, Swiderski 55).
Kosovo 0 lost to Turkiye 1 (Akturkoglu 53).
Czechia 2 (Sulc 3, Krejci 100) drew with Denmark 2 (Andersen 72, Hogh 111) aet (Czechia win 3-1 on penalties).
Iraq 2 (Al-Hamadi 10, Hussein 53) bt Bolivia 1 (Paniagua 38).
DR Congo 1 (Tuanzebe 100) bt Jamaica 0.

The groupings:
A: Mexico, Czechia, South Africa, South Korea; **B:** Canada, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Qatar and Switzerland; **C:** Brazil, Haiti, Morocco, Scotland; **D:** USA, Australia, Paraguay, Turkiye. **E:** Curacao, Ecuador, German, Ivory Coast; **F:** Netherlands, Japan, Sweden, Tunisia. **G:** Belgium, Egypt, Iran, New Zealand; **H:** Cape Verde, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Uruguay. **I:** France, Norway, Senegal, Iraq; **J:** Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Jordan; **K:** Colombia, Jamaica, Portugal, Uzbekistan; **L:** Croatia, England, Ghana, Panama.

Hitman to Ro-fit: Rohit 2.0 augurs well for MI

IPL-19

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

The last competitive match Rohit Sharma had played before walking out at the Wankhede Stadium on Sunday night in Mumbai Indians' Indian Premier League opener was in January. His previous T20 outing had come nearly 10 months ago, when Punjab Kings ended Mumbai Indians' run in Qualifier 2.

But when Rohit took guard against Kolkata Knight Riders in what turned out to be MI's highest successful chase in the IPL, the rust lasted all of four balls. Thereafter, until a stunning catch by Anukul Roy ended his 38-ball 78, Rohit rewound the clock, silencing doubters over whether he still possessed the will and skill to thrive in a high-intensity tournament.

MI head coach Mahela Jayawardene revealed that Rohit's sharpness was evident from the start of the pre-season camp. Having joined from day one – a rarity in recent years – Rohit looked fresh and focused, benefiting from simulation matches and practice scenarios designed to get him into rhythm. Jayawardene also lauded Rohit's opening partnership with Ryan Rickelton, noting the tactical clarity with which the duo paced the 221-run chase.

The signs of renewed sharpness extended beyond batting. Over the last 10 months, Rohit – fondly dubbed 'Ro-fit' – has undergone a noticeable transformation, shedding around nine kilograms in three months last year.

On Sunday, he fielded throughout KKR's innings,

Elegant and ruthless: Rohit had a belligerent start to IPL 2026, smashing 78 runs at a strike rate of 205. EMMANUAL YOGINI

MI head coach Jayawardene reveals that Rohit's sharpness has been evident from the start of the pre-season camp

He has been batting more freely and aggressively since Hardik took over the reins of the franchise

something he rarely did last season when used as an Impact Player or substituted out, before unleashing an attacking display.

His strike rate of 205 against KKR marked a continuation of a shift in approach over the past two seasons.

Since he was replaced with Hardik Pandya as MI captain, Rohit has struck at around 150 in both the 2024 and 2025 editions. The only other seasons where he maintained a strike rate in the 140s were in 2008 and 2015.

Jayawardene attributed the change to freedom from leadership responsibilities.

With less pressure and greater clarity, Rohit has relied on experience and muscle memory, a transition the team management has actively encouraged – and one that, on current evidence, appears to be paying rich dividends.

Refresh, reset — recipe for Connolly's success

S. Shrivathsan
NEW CHANDIGARH

One innings was all that Cooper Connolly needed to reverse his fortunes, both literally and statistically. The left-handed Australian went from scoring only 27 runs in his previous seven T20 appearances to accumulating an unconquered 72 on his IPL debut.

In the face-off against Gujarat Titans in New Chandigarh on Tuesday, the Punjab Kings batter exhibited why he is a much better player than the recent poor returns suggested. For the 22-year-old, a brief period away from the sport did the trick.

Turning point

"I had a couple of weeks at home to refresh and reset. It was probably the point where I changed and told myself that I was going to go to the IPL fresh," Connolly said after deservedly

Connolly. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

winning the Player-of-the-Match award for his well-constructed knock.

There was never a question mark over the sheer talent he possesses; it was about how often he could convert potential into productivity. Connolly's mental strength to overcome failures and begin a new chapter with a bang impressed Yuzvendra Chahal.

"Connolly is only 22 years old, but he is very hungry. The way he performed at No. 3 in his very first IPL game and the match-winning innings he delivered show how mature he is mentally.

"This is a good sign for our team. The way he is batting, he could be one of the finds of the season," said Chahal, another shining light for PBKS in its season-opener.

Fan army

Also among the members of the unofficial Connolly fan army is Kings captain Shreyas Iyer. "Some of the shots he played were surreal to watch. Connolly has got great awareness as a player. He has a great mindset and hopefully he continues with the same form," Shreyas sang praises of the new recruit.

PBKS would hope that Tuesday's masterclass was the first of many in red and blue.

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Medeira named BFC's Head of Youth Development

Bengaluru FC appointed Savio Medeira as the club's Head of Youth Development, it was announced on Wednesday.

Medeira previously served in multiple roles with the Indian senior men's national team. Medeira also led Salgaocar Sports Club to multiple Goa Professional League titles, and a runner-up finish in the National League.

Sony Sports Network launches Kannada channel

Sony Sports Network (SSN) launched the Sony Sports Ten 4 Kannada, as part of an expansion of its regional sports strategy. The Kannada channel launch builds on the rollout of Tamil and Telugu sports channels in 2025. Sony Sports Network now operates 11 sports channels across five languages – English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, and Kannada.

KSCA's gesture towards women cricketers

The Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) will extend a monthly gratis to women cricketers who have represented Karnataka in the senior women's national championship. Eligible players must have attained the age of 55 as on April 1, 2026.

Garuda HC whips Bagalkot Jilla

Garuda HC whipped Bagalkot Jilla HA 13-0 in the KSHA 'B' division hockey league on Wednesday. In another match, Ashco HC defeated Dhyanchand HC 3-1.

C.V. Raman Nagar, Shanti Nagar in last-eight

C.V. Raman Nagar blanked Padmanabhanagar 5-0 to top Group A and enter the last-eight of the KSFA-Vaishnavi Chief Minister's Cup football tournament on Wednesday.

In another fixture, Shanti Nagar trounced Malleshwaram 12-1 to enter the quarterfinal.

Williams' inclusion a kick in the right direction for India

There is no harm in strengthening a nation's sporting team by including talented players who may have grown up in a different country; the Blue Tigers also need exposure and experience

FOOTBALL

P.K. Ajith Kumar
KOCHI

Injecting quality and intensity: Australian-born Williams transformed the Indian team. THULASI KAKKAT

India's 2-1 victory over Hong Kong China on Tuesday night was mighty impressive. Khalid Jamil's boys thus were able to sign off their lacklustre campaign in the AFC Asian Cup qualifiers on a winning note.

But the match means much more than a consolation victory. It actually showed the way forward for the Blue Tigers.

India's first goal, which came in just the fourth minute, was scored by Ryan Williams. He is an Australian, let's face it. He qualified to play for India because his mother was born in India. With Williams up front, the Indian attack transformed. It became sharper, faster. And Sunil Chhetri wasn't missed that much.

Indian football should have tried long ago to bring into the national team foreign players with Indian connection, like Williams. Before him, only Arata Izumi from Japan had represented India. That was in 2013.

A player of the calibre of Michael Chopra was desperate to play for India, and he had told this correspondent, on the eve of the inaugural ISL season in 2014, that it was his dream to play for India. "I want to contribute to Indian football," said the man who had set the record for scoring the fastest goal in the English Premier League as a substitute.

There is no harm in strengthening a nation's sporting team by including exceptionally talented players who may have grown up in a different country.

Recall some of England's cricket teams from the past. They more resembled a United Nations delegation, with men from places like South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and the Caribbean islands. Even now, the England team features men like Ben Stokes and Jofra Archer.

So why can't India import more talent that would help improve its dismally ranked football team? Just look at how Cape Verde, a country with a population of just half-a-million, qualified for this year's FIFA World Cup by roping in players having dual nationalities playing in the leagues of countries such as Portugal, Spain, Bulgaria, Romania, Wales, USA, Turkiye, the Netherlands, Israel, Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

> The National Sports Policy 2025, which recommends that promising Indian-origin athletes living abroad may be encouraged to come back and play for India, will only make it easier for the federation and the players to make it possible

The recommendation from India's National Sports Policy 2025 is a step in the right direction: "Whenever feasible, promising and prominent Indian-origin athletes living abroad may be encouraged to come back and play for India at the international level."

And the Blue Tigers need to play more international matches. There is enough young talent in the country to afford hope of better days. But they need exposure.

Happy fans

And India's fans deserve to watch their team play. More than 22,000 fans turned up to watch India play Hong Kong at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. They loved every moment of it. The atmosphere was electric inside the stadium, a happy sight for an international football match in India.

Maybe it is time to have a tournament like the Nehru Gold Cup again.

Young Tigresses set for stern Japan test

U-20 ASIAN CUP

ANI
PATHUM THANI [THAILAND]

Hard at work: The Indians at a training session. AIFF

The Indian U-20 women's national team will kick off its AFC U-20 women's Asian Cup 2026 campaign against Japan on Thursday as the Young Tigresses end their 20-year wait to play in the tournament.

The match will kick off at 18:30 IST at the Thammasat Stadium here.

Head coach Joakim Alexandersson emphasised both realism and ambition ahead of the opener. "We are very much aware that we are new to this scene right now with the India team. We know we are facing tough opponents and we have respect for them," said the Swede, as quoted by AIFF.

"But also, we have a mindset that we want to make it through this group and qualify for the World Cup. That would be fantastic for the whole country," he added.

India's preparation for the tournament has been extensive with friendly matches in Kazakhstan followed by a month-long training camp in Sweden.

"The preparation has been good. I think we are ready for this tournament in a good way," said Alexandersson.

Japan, record six-time champion of the U20 Asian Cup, arrives as one of the favourites.

The Young Nadeshiko were also world champion in 2018.

Placed in a competitive Group C alongside Japan, Australia (April 5), and Taiwan (April 8), India's path to the knockout stage is demanding.

The top two, along with the two best third-placed sides across three groups, will advance to the quarterfinals, where a place in the FIFA U20 Women's World Cup Poland 2026 awaits the final four.

Sindarov takes out Caruana, goes into sole lead; Divya suffers a reverse

CANDIDATES CHESS

Sports Bureau

On a roll: Sindarov pulled off his second straight win at the expense of Caruana. FIDE

Javokhir Sindarov, who surprised many by winning the Chess World Cup in Goa four months ago, is looking in ominous touch at the Candidates tournament too. After beating long-time rival R. Praggnanandhaa on Tuesday, the 20-year-old Uzbek stunned the second seed and former World championship challenger Fabiano Caruana of the United States in the fourth round at Pegeia, Cyprus.

Sindarov thus emerged as the earliest sole leader. Going into the first rest day of the tournament, he has 3.5 points, one more than Caruana. Ten rounds remain.

Praggnanandhaa is on two points, after playing out a peaceful draw with Germany's Matthias Bluebaum. Both the men played accurately and reached an opposite-coloured bishop ending from a Semi-Slav Defence before signing peace in 37 moves.

In the women's Candidates, R. Vaishali registered her fourth draw in as many days – her latest rival was Russian Aleksandra Goryachkina – but Divya Deshmukh went down to China's Zhu Jiner.

Bibisara Assaubayeva of Kazakhstan and Ukraine's Anna Muzychuk, who defeated Kateryna Lagno of Russia, are in the joint lead, on 2.5 points.

The results (fourth round):

Andrey Esipenko (Rus) 1 lost to Anish Giri (Ned) 2; Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb) 3.5 bt Fabiano Caruana (USA) 2.5; Matthias Bluebaum (Ger) 2 drew with R. Praggnanandhaa 2; Wei Yi (Chn) 1.5 drew with Hikaru Nakamura (USA) 1.5.

Women: Anna Muzychuk (Ukr) 2.5 bt Kateryna Lagno (Rus) 2; Bibisara Assaubayeva (Kaz) 2.5 drew with Tan Zhongyi (Chn 1.5); Divya Deshmukh lost to Zhu Jiner (Chn); R. Vaishali 2 drew with Aleksandra Goryachkina (Rus 2).

Punjab State Grains Procurement Corporation Limited (PUNGRAIN)
Anaaj Bhawan, Sector-39, Chandigarh
Email: foodpurchase.fcs@punjab.gov.in

Notice Inviting Tender
E-Tender for Procurement of Unique QR Tag Stitchable on Bags

Pungrain invites online tender under two-bid system for supply of purchase of Unique QR Tag Stitchable on Bags.

The bid/tender document and other details are available on the e-procurement portal of the Government of Punjab i.e. **http://eproc.punjab.gov.in** and **http://foodsuppb.gov.in**.

Bid Submission Start Date : From 01.04.2026
Bid Submission Last Date : 10.04.2026

Note: Pungrain reserves the right to cancel the tender at any stage without assigning any reason and Pungrain will not be held liable for any cost and consequences incurred by the intending bidders.

Any corrigendum / addendum will be uploaded on GeM portal.

1027/12/2025-26/10064 **Managing Director Pungrain**

KARNATAKA GOVERNOR'S SECRETARIAT
Lok Bhavan, Bengaluru

No. GS 14 KOM 2025 **Date : 02.04.2026**

INVITING APPLICATION FOR THE POST OF VICE CHANCELLOR, KARNATAKA STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY, MYSURU

Applications are invited for the post of Vice Chancellor, Karnataka State Open University, Mysuru from eligible Professors. The candidates must have a minimum of 10 years working experience as Professor or equivalent post as per the guidelines of University Grants Commission and Karnataka State Open University Act, 1992 and submit their application furnishing information such as Educational Qualification, Research Academic and Administrative Experience etc., in four sets in the specified format available at website **www.ksoumysuru.ac.in** along with a self declaration to the **"Special Secretary to Governor, P.B. No. 5033, Lok Bhavan, Bengaluru-560001"** by **10.05.2026 before 5.30 P.M**. and a soft copy of the application to be emailed at **us.university.rb@karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
(R. Prabhushankar)
Special Secretary to Governor

DIPR/CP/6496/NR/2025-26

Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports
State Youth Centre, Nrupathunga Road, Bengaluru-560 001
Tel: 080-22215601, Fax: 080-22215602

No.: DYES/YN/YS/13/2025-26 **Date: 25.03.2026**

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through E-Procurement Portal Only)

According to Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports is inviting tender to obtain Manpower services for the execution of Yuva Helpline Program in 2025-26.

Sl. No.	Particulars	Tender Amount (INR in Lakhs)	EMD Amount (in INR)
1	Execution of Yuva Helpline Program in 2025-26.	8.70	21,750/-

The tender should be submitted through e-Procurement Portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Bidders need to register in the e-Procurement Portal to submit their bids online. The tender document can be viewed free of cost from the e-Procurement Portal.

(1) Last date and time for submission of Tender documents through E-Procurement Portal: **09.04.2026, time 16:00 Hrs.**, **(2)** Opening of Technical Bid: **10.04.2026, time 16:30 Hrs.**, **(3)** Opening of Financial bid: **Will be intimated through E-procurement portal**

Additional information may be obtained during office hours at the above mentioned address.

Sd/- Deputy Director (Admin) and Tender Inviting Authority
Dept. of Youth Empowerment and Sports

DIPR/CP/LC/06/2026-27

Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board
Kalyana Suraksha Bhavana, ITI Compound, Dairy Circle, Bannerghatta Road, Bangalore-560029
Phone: 080-29753354/56, Email: karbuildworkerswelfare@gmail.com

No: KBOCWWB/NOTIFICATIONs/2025-26 **Date:31-03-2026**

e-Tender Notification

Below mentioned Tenders (Two bid system - Technical and Financial bids) are hereby invited by Karnataka Building and other Construction Workers Welfare Board from interested Agencies as per Terms and conditions described in the Bid document for below mentioned.

1.Supply, Delivery and Installation of All-in-one Computers, Printers, Scanners and UPSs to the offices under Labour Department across the State of Karnataka.

2.Project Management Consultant Services for the work of PACKAGE (B-1) MYSURU DIVISION CLUSTER - CONSTRUCTION OF SHRAMIK RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS (4 Nos.) (FROM 6TH STD TO 12TH STD) AT 1. Yalagondanahalli Village, Kadur Taluk, Chikkamagaluru District, 2. Habbanaghatta Village, Arasikere Taluk, Hassan District, 3. Anjaru Village, Udupi Taluk & District & 4. Kuriya Village, Puttur Taluk, Dakshina Kannada District.

3.Project Management Consultant Services for the work of PACKAGE (B-2) MYSURU DIVISION CLUSTER - CONSTRUCTION OF SHRAMIK RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS (4 Nos.) (FROM 6TH STD TO 12TH STD) AT 1. Choranahalli Village, Mysuru Taluk & District, 2. Yadiyur Village, Chamarajanagara Taluk & District, 3. Beereshwara Village, Nagamangala Taluk, Mandya District & 4. Channapura Village, Somawarapete Taluk, Kodagu District.

Tenders shall be submitted electronically through K.P.P.Portal www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in of the Government of Karnataka. Last date of submission of completed tenders are as per KPP Portal. For further details and information can be obtained from the Joint Secretary, KBOCWWB during office hours.

Sd/- Joint Secretary, KB&OCWWB

DIPR/CP/18/HITEC MEDIA/2026-27

CAUVERY NIRAVARI NIGAMA NIYAMITHA
(A Govt. of Karnataka Enterprises)
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, CNNL, YAGACHI PROJECT DIVISION, BELUR, HASSAN DISTRICT
PHONE: 08177-222294(OFF) FAX : 08177-222293

Short term Tender Notification No.13/2025-26, Dated: 31-03-2026 (Through KPPportal only)

The Executive Engineer, CNNL., Yagachi Project Division, Belur-573115 Hassan Dist., invited Short termTender Notification through e- procurement only on behalf of the Managing Director, CNNL, Bangalore from the eligible contractors of PWDof any State/Central Government/Public Sector organization in Two cover system on the basis of KW-3conditions. 1)Amount Put to tender: Rs. 83.72 Lakhs (Excluding GST), 2) EMD amount Rs.1.67Lakhs.3) Number of Works: 01 (One) 4) The contractor can have access e-tender documents from Date: -02-04-2026 from 4.00 PM to Date: -10-04-2026 at 4.00 pm. through website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in on payment (Non Refundable) of transaction fees as fixed by e –portal, 5)Opening of Technical bid on Date:-13-04-2026 at 11.00 am onwards. (if possible) 6)Opening of Financial bid on Date: -After the Approval of Technical Bid. 7)Time limit:06months (Including monsoon)8)Eligiblity of Contractor:PWD Class-III&above. For further information etc., contact in the undersigned office during working hours or through website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in(Department).

Sd/- Executive Engineer, CNNL, Yagachi Project Division, Belur.

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಹೊಸನ/ಹಾಸನ/01/ಕೆಎಸ್.ಎಂಸಿಎ/2026–27

BANGALORE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
T. Chowdaiah Road, Kumara Park West, Bengaluru-560 020

No. BDA/RMP-2041/15/2026-27 Date: 01.04.2026

Global tender for selection of Agency to provide services for preparation of Revised Master Plan-2041 for Bengaluru Development Authority Local Planning Area
(Through e-Procurement only)

Bangalore Development Authority intends to prepare Revised Master Plan-2041 for its Local Planning Area and hence, proposes to engage the services of an Agency through e-tender process to provide services for the same.

Tender document containing details of eligibility criteria, scope of work and other terms and conditions may be obtained from the website of e-procurement Department, Government of Karnataka. The last date for submission of tenders at **http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in is 30.04.2026 at 5.30 p.m.** BDA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals without assigning any reason, whatsoever.

Helpline / Whatsapp: 9483166622 (24x7) @BDAOfficialGok

Sd/- Town Planner Member, BDA, Bengaluru

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Public Works Department
Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi

No/PWD/CKD DIV/AE-2/TENDER/2025-26/9134 DATE: 31/03/2026

E-Tender Notification

Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi has invited item wise e-Tenders from Registration in KPWD Department authorized by Karnataka Government for the works coming under the jurisdiction of Chikodi PWD Division 4 works under head of account 3054-MDR Maintenance, 1 work under head of account 3054-SH Maintenance, 2 works under head of account 4059-CMIDP, 1 work under head of account 5054-KRDCL and 1 work under head of account 4059-CMIDP (SCP). Totally 9 No. of works, amount put to tender is minimum of Rs. 20.00 Lakhs and maximum of Rs. 132.00 Lakhs.

Calendar of events for the works at Sl No. 1, 3, 5 to 7 & 9:

1)Pre-bid meeting date: 10-04-2026 at 11.00 AM, at The O/o the under signed. 2)Last date for queries & clarifications : 13-04-2026up to 5.30 PM 3) Last Date of Receipt of Bids : 16-04-2026up to 5.00 PM 4) Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 18-04-2026at 4.30 PM 5)Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): "after approval of Technical bids" 6) If no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.

Calendar of events for the works at Sl No. 2, 4 & 8:

1)Pre-bid meeting date: 16-04-2026 at 11.00 AM, at The O/o the under signed. 2) Last date for queries & clarifications : 18-04-2026up to 5.30 PM 3) Last Date of Receipt of Bids : 21-04-2026up to 5.00 PM 4) Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 23-04-2026at 4.30 PM 5)Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): "after approval of Technical bids" 6) If no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.

For more information & forms of tender can be downloaded from kppp.karnataka.gov.in& departmental web site www.kpwd.gov.in. Further details can be collected from O/o Executive Engineer Public Works Dept.,Division Chikkodi during working hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikodi.

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-12/KSMCA/2026-27

ನಗರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಹರಿಹರ–577601
ಫೋ:08192–244266 **ka.harihar.cmc@gmail.com**

ನಂ.ನಸಹ/ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ/ಐಎಫ್‌ಟಿ–25/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 31–03–2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

2021–22ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನಿಂದ 2023–24ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ 15ನೇ ಹಣಕಾಸು (ನಿರ್ಭಂಧಿತ) ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ಮತ್ತು 2026–27ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ನಗರಸಭೆ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ನಿಧಿ ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಆದೇಶ–1999–2000ರ Act 2000ರ ನಿಯಮದಂತೆ ಸ್ಟ್ಯಾಂಡರ್ಡ್ ಬಿಡ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ ಕೆ.ಜಿ–3ರ ನಿಯಮದನ್ವಯ ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತೆ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂಬರ್‌ಗೆ ನೀಡಲಾದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳನ್ನು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೊಂದಾಯಿತರಾದ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ/ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿದಾರರು ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು ಇಚ್ಛೆಯುಳ್ಳ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ತಮ್ಮ ದರಗಳನ್ನು KPP ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೋರಿದೆ. ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ತಮಗೆ ಅನ್ವಯಿಸುವ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳನ್ನು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಭರ್ತಿ ಮಾಡಿದ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದು ಹಾಗೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಶಾಖೆ ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಹರಿಹರ ಇವರಿಂದ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. **(1)** ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 21–04–2026 ರಂದು ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ 4.30 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ **(2)** ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ಮುಖಾಂತರ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 22–04–2026 ರಂದು ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ 5.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ **ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂಬರ್:–**

(1) DMA/2025-26/IND6148 ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ:–98.00 ಲಕ್ಷ.

ಸಹಿ/– ಆಡಳಿತಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಹರಿಹರ. **ಸಹಿ/–ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಹರಿಹರ.**

ವಾಸಾಇ/ಡಿವಿಜಿ/04/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/2026–27

Zilla Panchayat, Bengaluru South District
District Health and Family Welfare Officer
Bengaluru South Dist., **Phone:** 080-29576058, **e-mail:** dhoramanagaram@gmail.com

No.: DHO/R/OS/GROUPD/01/2025-26 Date: 31.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION (e-Procurement Tender Notification)

E-tender Notification for The Employee of Outsource Group D, Driver, Nursing Officer, LAB Technologist Officer, Pharmacy Officer, DEO, Claim Executive Services for Health Institutions under District Health and Family Welfare Officer, Ramanagara.

1	Tender Number	DHFWS/2025-26/SE1918/Call-2
2	Tender Commencement Date	Date: 31.03.2026
3	Approximate Value of tender	Rs. 2 Crore 48 Lakhs
4	EMD Amount	Rs.3,72,000/-
5	Last Date and Time for Submission of Tender	**07.04.2026, 5.30 PM**
6	Last Date for the Submission of the Objections against this tender along the Current Government Order (Objections after the Deadline will not be received	**06.04.2026, 5.30 PM**
7	Pre Bid Meeting Date & Place	**Date: 04.04.2026, 11:00 AM** District Health and Family Welfare Office, Railway Station Road, Ramanagara - 562159
8	Time and Date of Opening of Technical Bids	**Date: 09.04.2026, 11:00 AM**
9	Time and Date of Opening of Financial Bids	**13.04.2026, 11:00 AM**
10	Place of Opening of Tenders	District Health and Family Welfare Office, Bengaluru South - 562159 Contact No.: 8073333281

Sd/- District Health & Family Welfare Officer
Bengaluru South District

DIPR/BSD/04/SA/2025-26

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